

# IOWA BIRD LIFE



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The Iowa Ornithologists' Union was organized at Ames, Iowa, February 28, 1923, for the study and protection of native birds and to promote fraternal relations among Iowa bird students.

The central design of the Union's official seal is the American Goldfinch, designated State Bird of Iowa in 1933.

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# Greater Scaup In Iowa -- A Challenge

THOMAS H. KENT and THOMAS K. SHIRES

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Published records of Greater Scaup in Iowa are few. Brown found only five records from 1938 to 1971 (ref. 1). Morrissey, in an extensive description of waterfowl in the Davenport area in the 1940's, does not mention Greater Scaup (ref. 2). Petersen and Fawks show the Greater Scaup as a rare migrant in March and April with casual records in February and December (ref. 3). Only four reports of Greater Scaup were found in *Iowa Bird Life* from 1966 through 1978: at Hamburg (Getscher) and Des Moines (Stewart) in 1975, at the Coralville Reservoir (Halmi) in 1977, and at Princeton (Halmi and Kent) in 1978 (ref. 4).

The Greater Scaup is one of the toughest challenges in bird finding and identification in Iowa. Knowledge of distribution, habitat, migration time and identifying features increases the likelihood of finding this species as we shall demonstrate.

The Greater Scaup is established as a species separate from the Lesser Scaup by its distribution and certain measurements on specimens (length of wing strip, length of bill and body weight, refs. 5, 6). The circumpolar distribution of Greater Scaup contrasts with the North American distribution of the Lesser Scaup and the Eurasian distribution of a similar species, the Tufted Duck.

In North America the Greater Scaup nests mainly in Alaska and to a lesser extent eastward along its migration route in the Yukon, Northwest Territories and southern rim of Hudson Bay (refs. 5, 7). The Lesser Scaup nests in the prairie provinces, the northern great plains states and the Yukon and Northwest Territories.

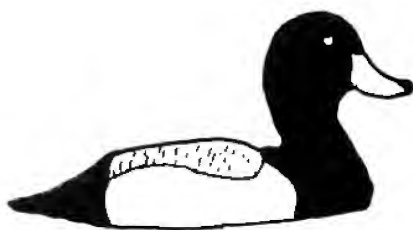
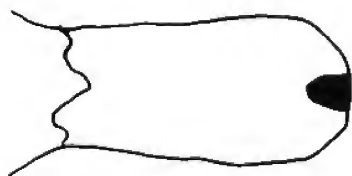
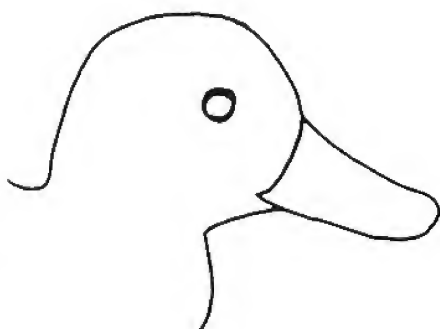
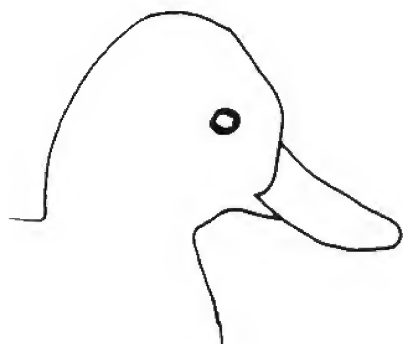
The wintering grounds of the vast majority of Greater Scaup are on the Pacific or Atlantic coasts with some lingering in the eastern Great Lakes. Small numbers also winter in the Gulf of Mexico and lower Mississippi Valley (ref. 7). The occurrence of Greater Scaup along the Mississippi flyway is poorly documented. Bent in 1923 considered the Mississippi route to the Gulf Coast to be a definite flyway with the number of birds using it varying from year to year (ref. 8). Johnsgard (ref. 5) has doubts about the Mississippi flyway: "Considering both the long migratory distance and cold weather tendencies of this species, it would seem that the Gulf Coast must not be a part of its regular wintering range." Nevertheless, Greater Scaup are regularly reported in small numbers on scattered Christmas bird counts from Louisiana, Texas, Arkansas and Mississippi. From the literature cited, we conclude that small numbers of Greater Scaup use the Mississippi flyway to reach wintering grounds in the lower Mississippi Valley and Gulf Coast.

Greater Scaup prefer salt water habitat in winter and large bodies of water in migration (ref. 5, 7, 8, 9, 10). Although Lesser and Greater Scaup occur in mixed flocks when found on inland waters, the Greater Scaup is more likely to be found on large expanses of water. Scaup prefer still water to rapidly moving rivers, so pools above dams are a more likely habitat than faster moving water below dams. Greater Scaup are said to be slightly earlier spring migrants than Lesser Scaup, so the concentration of Greater Scaup in mixed flocks is likely to be greater early in the spring as the ice goes out.

Field identification of Greater Scaup requires good viewing conditions, knowledge of what to look for and experience. Experienced birders, especially those that have frequent opportunities to observe both species, separate the scaups in the field with some degree of confidence. Differences can be observed in the head, bill, body and wing. The most important field marks are head shape in swimming ducks and the length of the wing stripe in flying ducks.

## LESSER

## GREATER



Comparative features of Lesser and Greater Scaup (see text for description)

The Lesser Scaup has a slightly pointed or angular head sometimes described as a rudimentary crest, whereas, the Greater Scaup has a rounded, low head profile often with flatness at the back of the crown (Figure). From the front, the top of the head appears narrower, almost two tiered, in the Lesser Scaup. Head color of male scaup may be a helpful but is not an entirely reliable field mark. In good light, the Greater Scaup has a green and the Lesser Scaup a purple iridescent gloss or sheen to the head. Head color, although useful, should be interpreted with caution as Lesser Scaup heads may appear green under some lighting conditions. The Greater Scaup head is very slightly larger than the Lesser.

Bill differences can be detected at close range. The Greater Scaup bill is longer, wider at both ends and has a larger bill nail (Figure). The larger wedge-shaped black bill nail at the center of the tip of the upper mandible in the Greater Scaup is difficult to see in the field.

Differences in the bodies are difficult to visualize but may be looked for in sitting birds at close range. The Greater Scaup is slightly larger than the Lesser Scaup with whiter sides (no black streaks) and grayer back due to finer vermiculations (Figure). The coarse vermiculations of the back of Lesser Scaup give a more speckled appearance. By contrast, the Tufted Duck and Ring-necked Duck have black backs.

In flight, Greater Scaup of both sexes have a white wing-stripe which, when seen from above, runs along the base of the secondaries and extends onto the primaries before fading out to gray. In the Lesser Scaup the white stops abruptly at the angle between secondaries and primaries but may extend as a dark gray stripe (Figure). The wing-stripe is distinctive but difficult to see in fast flying birds. It is best seen when birds are flying away from the observer, when the wings are set for landing or occasionally when swimming birds lift their wings briefly.

Female Greater Scaup are rarely identifiable in the field. The best male field marks, namely, head shape, bill size and wing-stripe, also apply to females but these are difficult to evaluate in isolated females. The white face-patch is said by some to be larger in the female Greater Scaup.

Sensing that Greater Scaup should be findable and identifiable in Iowa, we undertook the challenge in the early springs of 1978 and 1979. This produced five encounters. On March 11, 1977, we found 34 male and one female scaup in small areas of open water on the otherwise frozen Mississippi River above Lock and Dam 16 between Fairport and Montpelier (east of Muscatine). We had trouble getting close to them as they moved from one open area to another on a very overcast day. We thought they had rounded heads without rudimentary crest, and Shires saw a long white wing-stripe on occasion as the swimming birds raised their wings. Our failure to identify Lesser Scaup in the group was unusual because Greater Scaup are usually seen with Lesser Scaup in Iowa.

On March 19, 1978, Kent and Halmi identified one Greater Scaup in a flock of Lesser Scaup on the Mississippi River at Princeton. At close range, the rounded greenish head contrasted with the black-purple peaked head of the accompanying Lesser Scaup.

On March 10, 1979, we spent an exciting one and one-half hours watching scaup under ideal conditions on the Mississippi River above Lock and Dam 14 from Interstate 80 bridge north to LeClaire. Under partly sunny skies with light behind us, we watched about 60 scaup feeding close to shore. The first group of eight males and two females all had the features of Greater Scaup. The other flocks were mostly Lesser Scaup but contained approximately ten Greater Scaup.

We made the following observations concerning the Greater Scaups: (1) The head contour was smooth being flatter on top and wider when viewed from the

front than the Lessers. (2) When seen together the Greater Scaup had a larger head than the Lessers. (3) The Greater Scaup bill was distinctly larger being longer and wider at both tip and base than the Lesser. The Greater Scaup's bill seemed to be positioned higher in relationship to the forehead, giving a lower head profile. (4) Occasionally, under the same light, the greenish gloss of the Greater Scaup's head was seen in contrast to the black-purple gloss of the Lesser Scaup's head. (5) On a few occasions we caught a glimpse of the extended white wing-stripe of flying Greater Scaup. The head shape was the most consistently identifiable feature, although sometimes this was even difficult to distinguish.

On March 23 and 24, 1979, along with Halmi, we visited the waterfront at Guttenberg above Lock and Dam 10. In light rain at 5:30 p.m. on the 23rd we were able to pick out six Greater Scaup among hundreds of Lesser Scaup by their head shape and bill size. The next day we found about the same number. A pair of Greater Scaup flying into a stiff wind nicely exhibited their long white wing-stripes. One swimming bird stood out because of its whiter sides. The round head and large bill confirmed it as a Greater Scaup. We did see bill nails but could not say that they were larger in Greater Scaup.

On April 7, 1979, Kent found three or four Greater Scaup among thousands of Lessers between Lake Macbride and Ely in flooded corn fields caused by the Coralville Reservoir backing up into Hoosier Creek. Scaup and other ducks were feeding close to the road among corn stubble. A scaup with a green head stood out. It had a flat head and large bill with low head profile. The size of the bill nail was equivocally larger than adjacent Lesser Scaups' bill nails. In spite of close range and good light, the Greater Scaup was hard to keep track of because of frequent dives. In fact, there were probably two Greaters. The flock was flushed, but the Greater Scaup could not be picked out in order to look at the wing-stripe. Further up the road, a pair of scaup with head and bill shapes of Greaters were seen.

These encounters have convinced us of the following: (1) It is highly likely that Greater Scaup are regular migrants through Iowa in the Mississippi Valley, especially in early spring. (2) Field identification is difficult but not impossible. (3) The two field marks to concentrate on are head shape in swimming ducks and wing-stripe in flying ducks. (4) Other field marks are supplementary. They should be looked for systematically and evaluated with caution. Field guides do not give complete descriptions of these field marks. In approximate order of usefulness they are bill size, head color, size of bill nail, whiteness of sides, head size, grayness of back and body size. (5) One may not always be able to tell Greater and Lesser Scaup apart. To say "possible" or "probably" is more honest than always being sure. (6) All records of Greater Scaup should be reported to the field reports editor with documentation. The editor should not accept reports without thorough documentation. We believe Greater Scaup have been under reported in Iowa, however, over reporting would be far worse.

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## 57th Annual Iowa Ornithologists'

### Union Convention, Waterloo

The fifty-seventh annual convention of the Iowa Ornithologists' Union convened in Waterloo, Iowa on May 11, 12 and 13, 1979. The host group was the Waterloo Audubon Society. This meeting marked the first time that the Iowa Ornithologists' Union held a joint meeting with the Iowa Chapter of The Nature Conservancy.

There was an informal program on Friday evening, May 11th at the Petersen Town Hall of the Recreation Center. Gus Hanuska of Waterloo presented a slide presentation entitled, "Wildflowers of Iowa". This excellent presentation was followed by another slide program, "The Season of Renewal." This program was presented by Ken Heiar, whose excellent photography was enjoyed by all.

The Saturday meeting began when Chick Dikeman, representing the Waterloo Ambassadors of the Waterloo Chamber of Commerce, welcomed the I. O. U. and T. N. C. to Waterloo. I. O. U. President, George Crossley of Dubuque, responded to the welcome and accepted the hospitality of the Waterloo Chamber of Commerce and the Waterloo Audubon Society.

I. O. U. vice-president, Carl Kurtz of St. Anthony, introduced the morning's first speaker, Larry Stone of St. Olaf. Mr. Stone is well known to Iowans through his **Des Moines Register** column, "In the Open". Once again, the group was treated to outstanding photography in Mr. Stone's presentation, "Iowa Wildflowers".

Long-time I. O. U. member, Dean Roosa of Des Moines, the state ecologist, was next on the program. Mr. Roosa discussed a state breeding bird survey and the 1979 foray to be conducted in Lee County. He urged the group to aid in Dr. Dinsmore's nest file program. He stated that much information is needed for the fringe area of the state, particularly the south and west borders of the state.

Jon Stravers followed with a program entitled, "Red-tailed Hawk Research". Mr. Stravers discussed the factors relating to the breeding success of the Red-tail and the factors which cause the population of this hawk to decrease. The program was complete with slides of Red-tailed Hawks in many stages of development. The remainder of the morning was taken up with T.N.C. business meeting.

The afternoon session began with a most interesting program by Martha Whitson entitled, "Studying the Roadrunner in the Big Bend Country of Texas". Ms. Whitson is a native of Texas who now resides in Cedar Falls.

Peter Petersen of Davenport followed with an overview of the Petersen's trip to the XVII International Ornithological Congress, in Berlin, West Germany. They visited Spain, Berlin, Romania, Hungary and England.

Following a brief coffee break T.N.C. members left on a field trip to Sweets Marsh and I. O. U. members had their annual business meeting. President George Crossley called the meeting to order. Dr. Myrle Burk of Waterloo moved that the



minutes of the previous meeting be dispensed with as they were printed in I. B. L. Dorothy Brunner of Nora Springs seconded the motion and it carried. Ruth Buckles of Des Moines gave the treasurer's report which showed an improved cash balance. John Osness moved that it be approved, the motion carried. Mrs. Buckles gave the membership report.

Peter Petersen, editor of I. B. L. give his report. He said he was in good shape on general notes but now that the birding series was completed he would be happy to get longer manuscripts. He mentioned that Dr. Nicholas Halmi of Iowa City who has been a very fine editor for the field notes was leaving and that Dr. Tom Kent of Iowa City would be replacing him. Mr. Petersen asked for more documentation on sightings, particularly for Christmas Bird Census reports.

President Crossley thanked Mr. Petersen for honoring Nicholas Halmi for his fine job on the field reports. The hot line was discussed and it was suggested that it might be set up through the conservation commission. He said that rare bird pictures could be permanently filed with the librarian.

The president then announced the committees. John Osness, Beryl Layton and Dorothy Brunner would serve as the nominating committee. Lucille Liljedahl, Sara Millikin, and Antoinette Camarata would serve as the resolutions committee. The checklist committee will be Nick Halmi, Woodward Brown and Ross Silcock. He mentioned that field notes should be sent to Dr. Halmi, Rt. 6, Iowa City, 52240, by June 8.

Old Business. Ed Crocker of Storm Lake made the report for the scholarship committee. Mr. Crocker moved a scholarship fund with a \$500 minimum be established. Carl Kurtz seconded the motion and discussion followed. The motion carried. Mr. Crocker then announced that the fund now had \$200 from Wayne Pritchard and Ed Crocker.

Peter Petersen moved that the constitution be amended so that life memberships could be taken out by individuals only, not institutions. This policy would begin in January. The motion carried.

New Business. Peter Petersen discussed the possibility of publishing a bird finding guide from the articles which have appeared in the I. B. L. Following discussion Mr. Petersen moved that a printing of 1,000 copies be made of the bird finding book after one-third of the books have been sold in advanced sales. The motion carried.

President Crossley brought up the fact that there is no invitation for next spring's meeting. He said that Anita Fisher had invited the group to Keosauqua on September 22-23. Peter Petersen moved adjournment.

The banquet was held in the American Legion Hall in Waterloo. President Crossley had T.N.C. members stand, followed by I. O. U. members, and then members of both groups. He announced the honoring of Gladys Black by Pleasantville.

Carl Kurtz introduced the evening's speaker, Dr. William Franklin of Ames. His presentation was, "South American Andes, The Land, Its People and Wildlife". His photography was excellent and his message very absorbing.

The business meeting was reopened following Sunday's luncheon. The auditing committee consisting of Dick Mooney and Woodward Brown reported that they examined the books and records of the treasurer and found them in excellent condition.

Lucile Liljedahl of the resolutions committee gave the following report: Be it resolved by the 57th Annual I. O. U. and first joint I. O. U. and T.N.C. on May 11-13, 1979, that we the members give thanks to the Waterloo Audubon Society for hosting the spring meeting.



In particular we wish to thank the officers and executive council and our editor and librarian for their work in behalf of our organization.

Be it further resolved that our thanks be given to:

1. The president, Randy Betsworth, of the Waterloo Audubon Society, and to Robert Meyers, Lowell Miller, also the Waterloo ladies for cookies.

2. Waterloo Ambassadors of the Waterloo Chamber of Commerce for welcoming our clubs to the city.

3. Mr. Gus Hanuska of Waterloo and Ken Heiar of LaPorte City for the Friday evening program. Larry Stone, Dean Roosa, Jon Stravers, Martha Whitson, and Peter Petersen for the Saturday programs. Shirley Jane Miller, artist, for the painting display. Tom Pitzen, woodcarver, for his display of woodcarvings.

4. The Waterloo Audubon Society for the banquet arrangements and decorations, and to Dr. William Franklin for the banquet program.

5. The Sunday field trip leaders: Randy Betsworth, Antoinette Camarata, Robert Meyers, Francis Moore, Tom and Tommy Stone, John Osness, Evelyn Eilers and Rich McGeough. To the Izaak Walton League for the use of their facilities at Vinton, Iowa and the Waterloo Recreation and Art Center for the use of their buildings and the American Legion of Waterloo for the banquet and luncheon. Lucile Liljedahl moved the report be accepted. The motion carried.

John Osness of the nominations committee reported the slate of officers as follows: president, Carl Kurtz; vice-president, Larry Farmer; secretary, Mary Lou Petersen; treasurer, Ruth Buckles; executive committee, George Crossley, Dorothy Brunner, Dick Mooney and Curt Krieger. Margaret Brooke moved that the Secretary cast a unanimous ballot. The motion carried.

Peter Petersen introduced Shirley Briggs from Bethesda, Maryland, a long time I. O. U. member.

Judge Charles Ayres was compiler of the record tying 173 species seen. Bird List -- Eared Grebe, Pied-billed Grebe, Double-crested Cormorant, Great Blue Heron, Green Heron, Great Egret, Black-crowned Night Heron, Least Bittern, American Bittern, Canada Goose, Wood Duck, Gadwall, Green-winged Teal, Mallard, Common Pintail, Blue-winged Teal, Northern Shoveler, Ring-necked Duck, Lesser Scaup, Red-breasted Merganser, Turkey Vulture, Osprey, Northern Harrier, Sharp-shinned Hawk, Red-tailed Hawk, Broad-winged Hawk, Swainson's Hawk, Rough-legged Hawk, American Kestrel, Common Bobwhite, Ring-necked Pheasant, Virginia Rail, Sora, American Coot, Killdeer, Lesser Golden Plover, Hudsonian Godwit, Upland Sandpiper, Greater Yellowlegs, Lesser Yellowlegs, Solitary Sandpiper, Spotted Sandpiper, Wilson's Phalarope, Common Snipe, Short-billed Dowitcher, Semipalmated Sandpiper, Least Sandpiper, White-rumped Sandpiper, Baird's Sandpiper, Pectoral Sandpiper, Stilt Sandpiper, Herring Gull, Forster's Tern, Common Tern, Black Tern, Rock Dove, Mourning Dove, Yellow-billed Cuckoo, Great Horned Owl, Barred Owl, Common Nighthawk, Chimney Swift, Ruby-throated Hummingbird, Belted Kingfisher, Common Flicker, Pileated Woodpecker, Red-bellied Woodpecker, Red-headed Woodpecker, Hairy Woodpecker, Downy Woodpecker, Eastern Kingbird, Great Crested Flycatcher, Eastern Phoebe, Yellow-bellied Flycatcher, Willow Flycatcher, Least Flycatcher, Eastern Pewee, Olive-sided Flycatcher, Horned Lark, Tree Swallow, Bank Swallow, Rough-winged Swallow, Barn Swallow, Cliff Swallow, Purple Martin, Blue Jay, American Crow, Black-capped Chickadee, Tufted Titmouse, White-breasted Nuthatch, Brown Creeper, House Wren, Winter Wren, Marsh Wren, Sedge Wren, Gray Catbird, Brown Thrasher, American Robin, Wood Thrush, Hermit Thrush, Swainson's Thrush, Gray-cheeked Thrush, Veery, Eastern Bluebird, Blue-gray Gnatcatcher, Ruby-crowned Kinglet, Water Pipit, Cedar

Waxwing, European Starling, Yellow-throated Vireo, Solitary Vireo, Red-eyed Vireo, Philadelphia Vireo, Warbling Vireo, Black-and-white Warbler, Prothonotary Warbler, Golden-winged Warbler, Blue-winged Warbler, Tennessee Warbler, Orange-crowned Warbler, Nashville Warbler, Northern Parula, Yellow Warbler, Magnolia Warbler, Cape May Warbler, Black-throated Blue Warbler, Yellow-rumped Warbler, Black-throated Green Warbler, Blackburnian Warbler, Chestnut-sided Warbler, Bay-breasted Warbler, Blackpoll Warbler, Palm Warbler, Ovenbird, Northern Waterthrush, Kentucky Warbler, Connecticut Warbler, Mourning Warbler, Common Yellowthroat, Wilson's Warbler, Canada Warbler, American Redstart, House Sparrow, Bobolink, Eastern Meadowlark, Western Meadowlark, Yellow-headed Blackbird, Red-winged Blackbird, Northern Oriole, Orchard Oriole, Common Grackle, Brown-headed Cowbird, Scarlet Tanager, Northern Cardinal, Rose-breasted Grosbeak, Indigo Bunting, Dickcissel, Pine Siskin, American Goldfinch, Rufous-sided Towhee, Savannah Sparrow, Grasshopper Sparrow, Vesper Sparrow, Lark Sparrow, Chipping Sparrow, Clay-colored Sparrow, Field Sparrow, Harris' Sparrow, White-crowned Sparrow, White-throated Sparrow, Lincoln's Sparrow, Swamp Sparrow and Song Sparrow.

#### Registered Attendance - 148

Ames -- William and Merry Franklin, Roger Landers, Dean Roosa, Micheal Roughton, Hank Zaletel  
 Bondurant -- Jack Phipps  
 Brooklyn -- Robert Van Ervelde  
 Cedar Falls -- Dick Baker, Eleanor Corwin, Larry Eilers, Ken and Evalene Elkema, Joy Garlock, Jody Hines, Dennis Rowray, Lois Sherman, Daryl Smith, Martha Whitson.  
 Cedar Rapids -- Norman and Floy Erickson, Karl and Ruth Goellner, Vicki Hixson, Beryl and Pat Layton, Sara Millikin, Roberta Oppedahl, Lillian Serbousek  
 Centerville -- Bill and Marjorie Huesinkveld  
 Cherokee -- Dick and Judy Bierman  
 Davenport -- Peter and Mary Lou Petersen  
 Decorah -- Darwin Koenig  
 Des Moines -- Linda Bender, Dwight and Margaret Brooke, Woodward and Mary Brown, Ruth Buckles, Bette Jones, Dick and Pauly Mooney, Leroy and Louise Pratt, Sylvan and B. Runkel, Bruce and Sandra Skidmore, Trelen Wilson  
 Dubuque -- George and Frieda Crossley  
 Fairfield -- Viola Hayward, Margaret Lowell  
 Fort Dodge -- Ione Cervene, Esther Fiskel  
 Harlan -- Russell Field  
 Hastings -- Barbara Wilson  
 Indianola -- Rick and Beth McGeough  
 Iowa City -- Everett and Margaret Alton, Margrieta Delle, Gary and Sharon Garton  
 Jesup -- Clarise Hewitt  
 LaPorte City -- Bonnie Callon, Ken Heiar  
 Malvern -- Ross Silcock  
 Marshalltown -- Laura Glasgow, Marlys Huff, Mrs. and Mrs. Ed Savage  
 Marion -- Lucile Liljedahl, Mrs. Dayton Sippy  
 Mason City -- Curtis Krieger  
 Muscatine -- Allan Hahn  
 Nora Springs -- Dorothy Brunner  
 Oskaloosa -- Keith and Irene Layton  
 Ottumwa -- Charles and Darlene Ayres, Glenn and Laura Blome, Randall and

Nelson Hoskins, Don and Elaine Johnson  
 Pella -- Jon Stravers  
 Pleasantville -- Gladys Black  
 Pocahontas -- Madeline and Raymond Cummins  
 Reinbeck -- Evelyn Ehlers  
 Rock Valley -- Hilda Miller  
 Saint Anthony -- Carl Kurtz, David and Virginia Lyon  
 Saint Olaf -- Larry Stone  
 Shell Rock -- Clyde and Clarice Pettijohn  
 Solon -- Connie Mutel  
 Spencer -- Mr. and Mrs. Burdell Triplett  
 Storm Lake -- Edwin and Virginia Crocker, Mr. and Mrs. Phil Thornton  
 Sumner -- Ken Alpers, Greg and Bonnie Buckindahl, Arlan Kirchmann  
 Swalesdale -- Parker and Mae Koppen  
 Waterloo -- Dorothy Baringer, Randy Betsworth, Myrle Burk, Antoinette  
 Camarata, Hulda Flynn, Gus and Blanche Hanuske, Russell Hays, Harvey and  
 Anna Mae Kirchgatter, Francis and Peggy Moore, Lowell and Elanor Miller,  
 Robert and Betsy Myers, John and Lois Osness, Florence Pieres, Mrs. Joseph  
 and Mary Anne Rizzo, Alan and Jean Sherburne, Tom and Tommy Stone  
 West Des Moines -- Virgil Smith  
 Westfield -- Larry and Carol Farmer  
 Winthrop -- Fred and Reva Pierce  
 Bethesda, Maryland -- Shirley Briggs  
 Minneapolis, Minnesota -- Diane Hennes  
 Eemness, Holland -- Baroness H. P. J. VanTill

## Letter from the President

Each year brings us new challenges. With this year at its mid-point, I find my life has rounded another bend, and you, the members of the Iowa Ornithologists Union and The Nature Conservancy, have given me the opportunity to serve you in a greater capacity. For that opportunity and the confidence you have in my ability to fulfill the task, I thank you sincerely.

My interests are hardly confined to IOU or TNC, however, and thus it will be an unprecedented challenge to make the best use of my time. My farming operation still has its weeds, my photographic business suffers from underexposure, and there are personal commitments which have taken precedence in the past and will continue to do so in the future.

I make no promises, but do have the goal of leading both organizations to better fulfill the needs of their members and society which we serve. As members of IOU and TNC we must become active and not passive when something needs to be done. Words are meaningless if they are not followed by action.

To paraphrase a well known saying, "The natural resources of our world belong not to us or to our fathers, but to our children." If we take our responsibilities seriously, we then can see that our job as conservationists is to serve the future generations. This is not an easy task, for it is in almost direct opposition to the goals of today's often self-serving society where short-term profit-oriented goals direct action. Thus our job is not an easy one, and it will never be, but it is the only way to raise the quality of life for future generations. Carl Kurtz

## BANDING REPORT



KEITH & IRENE LAYTON

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OSKALOOSA

Everyone had a great bird banding year in 1978, judging by the reports reaching us for publication in *Iowa Bird Life*. Several records were set, several unusual and interesting activities were carried out, and there were the usual disappointments due to weather, health, interfering activities, etc., which effected the results some of us hoped for, but didn't accomplish.

Helping Dean Roosa in '78, in addition to the two reported for '77, were: Jon Stravers, Pella; Dave Fulks, Evansdale; Darwin Koenig, Decorah; and Joe Schaufenfuel, St. Lucas, a fine list of sub-permittees who turned in an amazing total of 148 Red-tailed Hawks, among other good results with hawks and owls. Kansas bander Peter Lowther from Univ. of Kansas at Lawrence, joins us this year, and reports the banding of a number of Iowa birds at home in Burlington. We are happy to have all of you working with us.

We need more accounts of the years outstanding returns, etc. Mosman tells of the Harris' Sparrow banded 2-8-77 and returned two winters later on 11-30-78, also a Purple Finch which was banded at Eastern Illinois Univ. on 3-8-75 and was captured by him on 3-5-78. DeLong writes of an Am. Goldfinch that she banded 5-11-73 and recaptured 2-29-78 -- 5 years later. An Indigo Bunting banded 5-12-75 returned 7-19-76 and 5-19-78. Layton banded a Red-headed Woodpecker on 6-13-71 and recaptured it 5-8-78 -- 7 years later.

Most numerous species this time were, American Goldfinch -- 1786, N. Junco -- 1380, and Cliff Swallow -- 1180. Total of birds banded is up from 17,304 in 1977 to 26,098 in 1978. This is largely due to a big year by the Iowa Conservation Commission, working with Mallards, Wood Ducks and Blue-winged Teal. Species dropped from 160 in 1977 to 159 in 1978, considerably less than the apparent all time high of 187 banded in 1974. Of interest is the fact that 174 species were banded three years in a row, in '66, '67 and '68. In 1961 only 5,052 birds of 134 species were banded. Active banders that year were reported as 14 -- not many more participated this year, but more than 5 times as many birds were banded! Good work, everyone!

Our "ONLY ONE CLUB" boasts 5 members for 1978, with only 8 species represented, a very interesting list it is, of which only the Louisiana Waterthrush and the Worm-eating Warbler were on the '77 list. Alphabetically:

CHARLES & DARLEEN AYRES -- Louisiana Waterthrush.

GENE & MARILYN BURNS -- McGillivray's Warbler. (The only other reported for Iowa was one by Diggs in 1974.)

KEITH & IRENE LAYTON -- Bewick's Wren

PETER C. PETERSEN -- Solitary Sandpiper, Horned Lark, Worm-eating Warbler, Lapland Longspur, and Hoary Redpoll. We have a new one on our state list!)

Space permits mention of only a few of so many interesting facts. DeLong banded 84 Eastern Kingbirds attracted to their yard by 10 Arrowhead shrubs. Mosman had a good year with 225 Purple Martins. Our newest banders, the Burns',

set the bridges and culverts in their area afire with an incredible, hard to ever equal or beat, total of 1,138 Cliff Swallows! Not bad for a beginner, but wait till next year! Their total of 156 American Kestrels taken with a bal chatri trap also seems to be the most ever. Congratulations Gene and Marilyn! Roosa lists 14 Red-shouldered Hawks in addition to the record breaking 148 Red-tailed.

Following is an alphabetical list of all Iowa bird banders who reported their 1978 results to us, showing species and individual birds banded.

Bander	Number of Species	Total Banded
Charles & Darleen Ayres	95	1,665
Gladys Black	23	59
Gene & Marilyn Burns	79	2,500
Genevieve DeLong	70	959
Hazel & Fitzhugh Diggs	90	1,927
Jim Dinsmore	5	85
Iowa Conservation Commission	7	7,924
Ann Johnson	72	1,334
Keith & Irene Layton	114	2,776
Peter Lowther	4	7
Dean Mosman	24	701
Peter Petersen	116	4,817
Ruth Phipps	34	915
Dean Roosa	9	183
Marie Spears	39	363
Betty Walters	27	84
	159	26,282

Species	No.		
Black-crowned Night	35	Yellow-billed Cuckoo	35
American Bittern	3	Black-Billed Cuckoo	14
Canada Goose	663	Great Horned	19
Wood Duck	1,723	Barred Owl	3
Green-winged Teal	40	Saw-whet Owl	10
Mallard	4,418	Common Screech Owl	15
Common Pintail	48	Whip-poor-will	4
Blue-winged Teal	1,023	Common Nighthawk	4
Northern Shoveler	10	Chimney Swift	4
Northern Harrier	1	Ruby-throated Hummingbird	17
Northern Goshawk	1	Belted Kingfisher	3
Sharp-shinned Hawk	33	Common Flicker	174
Red-tailed Hawk	148	Red-bellied Woodpecker	39
Red-shouldered Hawk	14	Red-headed Woodpecker	77
Broad-winged Hawk	2	Yellow-bellied Sapsucker	7
Swainson's Hawk	3	Hairy Woodpecker	38
American Kestrel	182	Downy Woodpecker	263
Killdeer	10	Eastern Kingbird	97
Solitary Sandpiper	1	Great Crested Flycatcher	66
Spotted Sandpiper	6	Eastern Phoebe	32
American Woodcock	2	Yellow-bellied Flycatcher	92
Least Sandpiper	8	Acadian Flycatcher	37
Pectoral Sandpiper	10	Willow Flycatcher	115
Black Tern	9	Least Flycatcher	158
Mourning Dove	17	Eastern Pewee	45
		Olive-sided Flycatcher	3

Horned Lark .....	1	Blackpoll Warbler .....	17
Tree Swallow .....	3	Palm Warbler .....	34
Bank Swallow .....	362	Ovenbird .....	173
Rough-winged Swallow .....	9	Northern Waterthrush .....	34
Barn Swallow .....	141	Louisiana Waterthrush .....	1
Cliff Swallow .....	1,180	Kentucky Warbler .....	7
Purple Martin .....	253	Connecticut Warbler .....	14
Blue Jay .....	354	Mourning Warbler .....	57
Black-capped Chickadee .....	351	McGillivrays Warbler .....	1
Tufted Titmouse .....	62	Common Yellowthroat .....	186
White-breasted Nuthatch .....	67	Yellow-breasted Chat .....	3
Red-breasted Nuthatch .....	7	Hooded Warbler .....	2
Brown Creeper .....	114	Wilson's Warbler .....	79
House Wren .....	449	Canada Warbler .....	34
Winter Wren .....	27	American Redstart .....	125
Bewick's Wren .....	1	House Sparrow .....	15
Gray Catbird .....	808	Eastern Meadowlark .....	5
Brown Thrasher .....	219	Western Meadowlark .....	2
American Robin .....	778	Yellow-headed Blackbird .....	18
Wood Thrush .....	37	Red-winged Blackbird .....	166
Hermit Thrush .....	97	Orchard Oriole .....	6
Swainson's Thrush .....	362	Northern Oriole .....	174
Gray-cheeked Thrush .....	99	Rusty Blackbird .....	4
Veery .....	49	Common Grackle .....	240
Eastern Bluebird .....	48	Brown-headed Cowbird .....	55
Blue-gray Gnatcatcher .....	3	Scarlet Tanager .....	18
Golden-crowned Kinglet .....	43	Northern Cardinal .....	307
Ruby-crowned Kinglet .....	285	Rose-breasted Grosbeak .....	271
Cedar Waxwing .....	17	Indigo Bunting .....	184
Loggerhead Shrike .....	20	Dickcissel .....	11
European Starling .....	26	Evening Grosbeak .....	3
Bell's Vireo .....	6	Purple Finch .....	350
Yellow-throated Vireo .....	8	Common Redpoll .....	591
Solitary Vireo .....	72	Hoary Redpoll .....	1
Red-eyed Vireo .....	290	Pine Siskin .....	492
Philadelphia Vireo .....	26	American Goldfinch .....	1,786
Warbling Vireo .....	50	Rufous-sided Towhee .....	11
Black-and-white Warbler .....	83	Grasshopper Sparrow .....	8
Worm-eating Warbler .....	1	Vesper Sparrow .....	8
Golden-winged Warbler .....	15	Lark Sparrow .....	5
Blue-winged Warbler .....	12	Northern Junco .....	1,380
Tennessee Warbler .....	218	American Tree Sparrow .....	379
Orange-crowned Warbler .....	125	Chipping Sparrow .....	79
Nashville Warbler .....	213	Clay-colored Sparrow .....	3
Northern Parula .....	5	Field Sparrow .....	55
Yellow Warbler .....	63	Harris' Sparrow .....	139
Magnolia Warbler .....	113	White-crowned Sparrow .....	17
Cape May Warbler .....	2	White-throated Sparrow .....	375
Black-throated Blue Warbler .....	5	Fox Sparrow .....	116
Yellow-rumped Warbler .....	221	Lincoln's Sparrow .....	106
Black-throated Green Warbler .....	22	Swamp Sparrow .....	62
Blackburnian Warbler .....	13	Song Sparrow .....	122
Chestnut-sided Warbler .....	47	Lapland Longspur .....	1
Bay-breasted Warbler .....	99		

FREMONT COUNTY FORAY, JUNE 2-7, 1978  
W. ROSS SILCOCK  
MALVERN

The 1978 Fremont County Foray was very successful, especially in the number of species recorded (134, partly due to a late migration), and nests and breeding evidence were noted for some interesting species. Four 50-stop Survey Routes were run, patterned after the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Breeding Bird Routes. Field trips were made to good habitat areas in the remaining time available, thus achieving fairly thorough coverage of the County's birdlife. This year's participants worked hard, as the size of the bird list suggests, and my hearty thanks are due them. They were: Jean Braley, Hazel and Fitzhugh Diggs, Ione Getscher, John McNeilly, Ruth Phipps, Marie Spears, Michael Thompson, and Barb Wilson.

The complete bird list is not given here, but is available on request from me. Below are brief discussions of the species which I consider to be of most interest which were recorded during Foray and subsequent follow-up trips. Following these discussions is a summary of the numerical data obtained from the survey routes, and some conclusions about population changes revealed by these data.

**Some species recorded on the Fremont County Foray, 1978**

**Eared Grebe:** Eight were at Forney Lake June 2 (RS,MT,BW) and two June 4 (RS,BW), all in breeding plumage. At least two were still present June 14 (JB,RP). A search for nests June 2 and 4 was unsuccessful, suggesting that these birds were late migrants. However the birds seemed paired and some displaying was observed. The nearest regular breeding places appear to be Cherry County in Nebraska (Rapp et al, 1958) and Nicollet County in Minnesota (Green and Janssen, 1975). The most recent breeding reports in Iowa come from the northwest in 1965-66 (Brown, 1971), although possible breeding were birds seen June 26, 1973 in Calhoun County (Iowa Bird Life 43:74) and July 9, 1977 at West Okoboji (IBL 47:99). There is also a June 2-17 record of a bird at Maryville, Missouri (American Birds 27:875). The nearest reported nesting to southwest Iowa was over 75 years ago at West Point and Omaha, Nebraska (Anderson, 1907).

**Pied-billed Grebe:** This species was breeding commonly at Forney Lake this year. On June 2 and 4 almost complete coverage of the lake yielded 18 nests, all with eggs (RS,MT,BW). Clutch size ranged from 4 to 11, averaging 6.9, although some clutches may have been incomplete. Palmer (1976) gives the normal range as 4-7, occasionally 2-10. This species breeds commonly in northwest Iowa (AB 31:1146) and bred at Squaw Creek National Wildlife Refuge in 1973 (AB 27:875). It will probably breed in this area whenever there is suitable habitat, but has probably been absent the last two years due to dry conditions.

**Little Blue Heron:** One was at Forney Lake June 4 (RS,BW), an adult bird first noted by Wilson. Breeding in this area is possible as this species is expanding its range northward, with first breeding records being established for South Dakota in 1976 (AB 30:969) and Minnesota in 1972 (AB 26:861).

**Cattle Egret:** A flock of 14, some in breeding plumage, was at Forney Lake June 4 (RS,BW). This species is also expanding its breeding range northward, with first breeding records for North Dakota in 1976 (AB 30:969) Minnesota in 1971 (AB 27:871), and Wisconsin in 1975 (AB 29:975).

**Great Egret:** Four were seen at Riverton with several Great Blue Herons June 3 (JB,JM,RS). They may be breeding with the Great Blue Herons, but as yet no heronry has been located, despite much searching.



**Yellow-crowned Night Heron:** Three adult-plumaged birds were found roosting together at Forney Lake June 4 (RS,BW) and a single adult was seen by the same observers at Willow Slough in northeast Mills County June 23. These observations suggest the existence of a breeding population in the area. Indeed, two juvenal-plumaged birds were flushed from the same grove of cottonwoods at Forney Lake on each of three visits during August (RS). I believe these birds were fledged in the area. There are several summer records for southeast Nebraska reported in *Nebraska Bird Review*, especially in the 1960s, when it was also recorded nesting in Iowa for the first time (Brown, 1971). Actual nest records in southeast Nebraska are few however. It was reported as nesting in Nemaha County in 1963 (NBR 32:45) and in Sarpy County also in 1963 (NBR 32:9). Up to 14 were present all summer at Squaw Creek NWR and a nest was found at Rosendale, Missouri, just north of St. Joseph, all in 1976 (AB 30:962).

**Least Bittern:** A total of five was flushed at Forney Lake June 2 and 4 (RS,MT,BW). A nest with eggs was found at Willow Slough and two birds were flushed from a partly-constructed nest at Forney Lake June 4. Thus this species is a fairly common breeding bird in Fremont County, given suitable habitat.

**Osprey:** Two at Riverton June 3 may have been a pair, and one was carrying what appeared to be a stick or snake (JB,JM,RS). Observation of their behavior did not indicate a nesting site however, and they could not be found there on subsequent visits (RS). Most interesting however was the sighting by Braley June 11 of a single bird soaring over the loess bluffs south of Waubesa State Park with a Turkey Vulture. This June 11 record may have been one of the Riverton birds, raising the possibility that breeding took place somewhere in the area, with Riverton merely a feeding place. Carp were abundant in the shallow water at Riverton June 3 as the lake was being drained. While the AOU Checklist (1957) includes the continental United States in the breeding range "in scattered localities," Robbins et al (1966) indicate breeding in the interior only as far south as Minnesota and Wisconsin. There may only be one valid record of breeding in Iowa (Anderson, 1907), of ancient vintage, as is the lone record of breeding in Nebraska (Rapp et al, 1958). There are however recent summer reports of Ospreys at Squaw Creek NWR (AB 26:865) and Red Rocks Reservoir in Iowa (IBL 42:69) both single birds in July. In common with the Bald Eagle, this species may be recovering its former numbers and reclaiming parts of its former breeding range.

**American Coot:** This species was breeding commonly at Forney Lake this year, where 46 nests, all with eggs, were located June 2 and 4 (RS,MT,BW). The clutch size varied from 1 to 14, with an average of 6.8 eggs. Some of these clutches were probably incomplete. The number of nests indicates a breeding population of some 100 birds. Nests were also found at Willow Slough (BW). As in the case of the Pied-billed Grebe, this species will nest in this area when habitat is suitable, although such a sizeable breeding population this far south in Iowa seems unusual. Brown (1971) considers it a common breeding bird in Iowa "especially in the northern part of the state", but is listed as only occasional in summer at Squaw Creek NWR, although breeding has been recorded there.

**Spotted Sandpiper:** Three were at Forney Lake June 4 but no nest could be found (RS,BW). However one was flushed from a weedy area near a small marsh on the Missouri floodplain during the Blue Route survey June 6 (RS,MT) and the nest was found later in the day (BW), containing four eggs. One bird was also reported on the Green Route survey June 5 (RP,JB,IG,MS). While Brown (1971) considers it a common breeding bird in Iowa, its nest is not often found and none were recorded during Foray in 1977.

**American Woodcock:** One was flushed while feeding at Riverton June 3 but a nest search of nearby likely spots was unsuccessful (RS). Wilson flushed a bird from the same place twice in 1977 in northeast Mills County (June 9 and 16) but no nest was found. An article in the *Omaha World Herald* July 23, 1977 stated that "there are some birds nesting along the Missouri", but it is not listed as a summer bird at Squaw Creek NWR. Rapp et al (1958) considered it only a rare migrant in the Missouri River Valley region, although Bruner et al (1904) stated that it bred occasionally in the same area. There have been several June and July records published in NBR since 1961, but no nests have been reported. It does appear to be increasing in numbers in this area in summer, as the *Omaha World Herald* article suggests. Furthermore its habitat requirements would be met here (see IBL 46:76). It is increasing as a breeding bird in Minnesota (AB 27:872), and South Dakota's second nest record was made in Brookings County April, 1972 (AB 26:872).

**Chuck-will's-widow:** Two were heard at the same place just north of Waubonsie SP June 3 (RS). This was expected as there have been records from both Page and Mills Counties in Iowa and several records from southeast Nebraska in recent years (see IBL and NBR). However it is by no means common, and low numbers may indicate sporadic breeding only. It appears to occur in the wooded loess bluffs areas where there are open places in Fremont County.

**Ruby-throated Hummingbird:** This species is at best uncommon and alarmingly hard to find in summer. Only one was recorded during Foray, in the picnic area at Waubonsie SP (RP et al).

**Yellow-bellied Flycatcher:** One was reported seen and heard on the bridge at Waubonsie SP June 2 (RP et al), and one, probably the same bird, was heard in the same area June 5 (RS,MT,BW). Because of the late date and the presence of Eastern Pewees, great care was taken with identification. The June 5 bird, although not seen, was calling persistently, the tone of its calls being noticeably different from that of the pewee calls heard at the same time. Brown (1971) gives a late date for Iowa of June 3, but late-migrating *Empidonax* may not be overly unusual (Alder Flycatcher on 1977 Foray and Least Flycatcher this year - see below). Indeed, there are three June records in the literature for the Yellow-bellied Flycatcher in this area: NBR gives June 7 and 18 dates in Lancaster and Cass Counties respectively, and there is a June 29 date for Fremont County reported by Getscher (IBL 39:62), the latter extremely late.

**Least Flycatcher:** One was calling vigorously in a patch of open woods at the Missouri River bridge to Nebraska City June 4 (BW). It was recorded again on the Blue Route survey June 6 (RS,MT), but was absent June 7 and July 8, indicating that it was a transient. Brown (1971) considers it a rare breeding bird in Iowa, citing two records from northern Iowa and one of a "possible resident" in northwest Iowa. However at DeSoto Bend NWR it is listed as common, and indicated as a breeding bird. To confirm this, I wrote to Dr. Grube, Professor of Biology at Dana College, Blair, Nebraska, in 1975. He replied in part, "Least Flycatchers can be heard in the forested area, especially on the east side of the lake. My guess is that they are more common during the breeding season than Wood Pewees." (emphasis mine). The Fontanelle Forest checklist (LeDioyt and Cortelyou, undated) lists it only as a migrant, however, and there is no mention of its breeding in Dakota County, Nebraska (Stephens, 1957). The latter paper does state however that Aughey took specimens in Dakota County in June and July and Rapp et al (1958) state that it is a "rare breeder in the eastern quarter of the state". Short (NBR 33:3) noted that it was "nowhere common in the state (of Nebraska)" as a breeder, "even along its eastern border." It was considered a "summer resident"

at Plattsmouth NWR in 1964 however (NBR 33:17), and was present through June 28, 1974 in Douglas-Sarpy Counties and throughout summer there in 1973 (see NBR). Thus the evidence suggests that this species may breed rarely in this area and at times commonly, as at DeSoto Bend NWR.

**Brown Creeper:** Although the AOU checklist (1957) gives the southern edge of the breeding range of this species as "south to southeastern Nebraska (Red Cloud, Lincoln, Omaha), southern Iowa (Blakesburg, Davenport) . . .", there is no mention of breeding in Nebraska by Rapp et al (1958). Brown (1971) considered it a rare breeding bird in Iowa, with one record of an adult feeding a young bird in Boone County in central Iowa. There are also some summer records for Iowa which may or may not refer to breeding birds (Brown, 1971). Although it is listed only as a migrant in the Fontanelle Forest checklist (LeDioyt and Cortelyou, undated), since the checklist was published Brown Creepers have been found breeding there. The first nest was found in 1975, although birds carrying food had been seen in 1974 and 1975 (NBR 33:80). Nesting was also reported in the 1977 nesting survey in NBR for Sarpy County, when three nests were found, presumably in the Forest (NBR 45:37). Thus a population is established very near Fremont County and apparently increasing, suggesting that breeding may occur in Fremont County, possibly at Waubonsie SP. None were found during Foray, although a late bird was in apparently suitable breeding habitat at Waubonsie State Park April 22 (RS).

**Blue-gray Gnatcatcher:** This species was not found during the 1977 Foray but two were discovered this year at the north end of the picnic area at Waubonsie SP June 2 (RP et al). Although they were watched for some time no evidence of breeding could be discerned. One was at the main overlook June 5 (BW), possibly one of those seen June 2, as the two sites are not far apart. This species is rare and irregular in Fremont County, with breeding not proven.

**Cedar Waxwing:** Four were reported June 5 on the Green Route survey south of Waubonsie SP along the loess bluffs (RP et al), and a flock of 16 was watched at Waubonsie SP June 5 (BW,RS,MT). These were probably migrants, especially the large flock, but breeding is possible in the area.

**Loggerhead Shrike:** This species was common in the County this year. A total of 9 was reported on the survey routes and several broods were seen (RS,BW). A breeding population of some 36 pairs is estimated for the County.

**Prothonotary Warbler:** Three singing males were found near the boat dock at Riverton GMA June 3 (JB,JM,RS). They were all in one area and no others were found that day. However one was found June 7 at the south end of the GMA (BW), suggesting that a small breeding population exists at Riverton.

**Louisiana Waterthrush:** A pair was seen along the bridle trail at Waubonsie SP June 5 at the same location where a pair was feeding a young bird in 1977 (RS), but none were found in the main part of the park. Thus the small colony is persisting (see IBL 47:123).

**American Redstart:** This year a pair was found in the riparian woods at the south end of the Riverton GMA June 7 (MT). A female was near the male, but no evidence of breeding was noted. None of this species was found in 1977, but they may have been more common this year, as besides the above pair, two and possibly three singing males were seen near the Missouri River near Nebraska City in Fremont County July 8 (RS). No females were seen at the latter location. Short stated (NBR 29:17): ". . . the species has a very spotty distribution (in Nebraska) . . . it can be considered common perhaps in portions of the Missouri River Valley Region . . ."

**Summer Tanager:** Three males were recorded at Waubonsie

SP June 5 (RS,BW,MT). One of these was on territory and singing and the other two were discovered due to their antagonistic behaviour toward one another. Of these latter two, one was a young male with incompletely red plumage. No females were seen and I have only one record of a female at Waubonsie SP, that in summer of 1975.

**Swamp Sparrow:** Two were reported from one stop on the Purple survey route June 7 by Hazel and Fitzhugh Diggs. They could not be located later indicating that they were probably migrants (RS). The site did not appear suitable for breeding. Brown (1971) lists it as a common breeding bird in northern Iowa, as far south as Muskrat Slough in eastern Iowa. It is considered occasional in summer at Squaw Creek NWR and has bred there. Rapp et al (1958) describe it as a "locally rare summer resident" in northern Nebraska, and Johnston (1965) does not mention its breeding in Kansas. Easterla and Anderson (1971) list it as a former casual summer resident in northern Missouri, and this information, together with its status at Squaw Creek NWR indicates that it may breed on rare occasions in the Fremont County area.

#### Summary of Numerical Data

To enable comparison of the Survey Route data between 1977 and 1978, the 1977 totals for each species were multiplied by 1.94 (1977 had 103 stops and 1978 had 200). Habitat makeup was similar for the two years except that addition of the Purple Route in 1978 increased the proportion of upland farmland and pasture. Extension of the 1977 routes to 50 stops counteracted this to some extent and at the same time kept other habitat types fairly constant as a proportion of the total makeup.

The data reflect the increase in farmland fairly strongly, as shown by the representative species in the table below:

Table 1			
Species	1978 as of 1977		
Killdeer	+ 125	European Starling	+ 154
Rock Dove	+ 162	Warbling Vireo	+ 250
Eastern Kingbird	+ 28	(House Sparrow	+ 689)
Barn Swallow	+ 91	Eastern Meadowlark	+ 85
American Crow	+ 108	Common Grackle	+ 45
Brown Thrasher	+ 62	Brown-headed Cowbird	+ 188
		Grasshopper Sparrow	+ 142
		Average: (exclusive of	
		House Sparrow)	+ 120

The massive increase in House Sparrow numbers may have been due to observer estimates of numbers present at farmsteads rather than actual counts, as well as habitat change, and thus was excluded from the average. Using this average it could be concluded that addition of the Purple Route had the effect of increasing farmland habitat some 120 percent, which seems unlikely as there are three other routes included in the totals. Thus it seems to have been a good year for farmland birds, and especially so for Warbling Vireo and Brown-headed Cowbird.

However there were some species which showed population changes counter to this upward trend. Most significant perhaps was the Dickcissel, which decreased in numbers some 37 percent. Mourning Dove also showed a decrease, but only by 9 percent. Personal observations would support these two population declines. The effects of last winter's severity on gamebirds is shown in the decrease for both Common Bobwhite and Ring-necked Pheasant of 18 percent and 30 percent respectively. Keep in mind these decreases are probably more significant than the numbers show, as upland habitat was increased over last year.

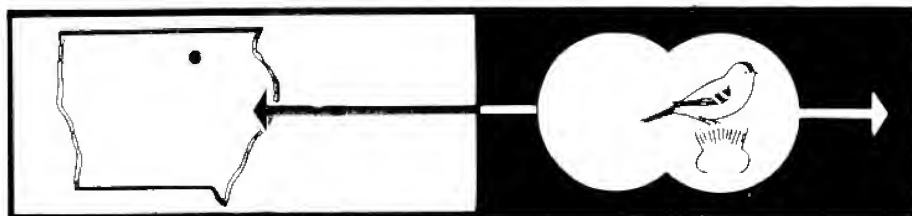
Another species showing a large population change was the Horned Lark, not included in Table 1 because it is found primarily on the Missouri River floodplain

in Fremont County. It increased some 563 percent over 1977 probably for two related reasons: firstly the enormous numbers present this past winter (IBL 48: 33), and secondly the large amount of habitat available this spring due to delayed fieldwork for nesting.

Finally a note about the Western Meadowlark. As shown above, the Eastern Meadowlark increased some 85 percent over 1977, probably reflecting its dependence on upland farmland-pasture type habitat, whereas the Western Meadowlark increased only 14 percent, reflecting its independence of such habitat. This adds additional weight to the suggestion made in 1977 (IBL 47:131) that the Western Meadowlark, at least in Fremont County, is primarily a bird of edge habitats between cultivated fields, and tends to be replaced by the Eastern Meadowlark where pasture is present, either in large tracts or between cultivated fields.

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## FLOYD AND CERRO GORDO COUNTIES

DOROTHY A. RUNNER

NORA SPRINGS

Floyd County

Mill Dam Park - Nora Springs - 28 acres along the Shell Rock River formerly

controlled by the Conservation Board but has now been turned over to the town of Nora Springs. Turn north off Highway 18 to sixth street then west. It is at the west end of sixth street. Good birding during migration with many warblers along a stream that empties into the river. Orioles and other birds nest in the tall trees. A foot path follows the river. A picnic pavilion on the west side of the river can be reached by turning off Highway 18 onto N. Hooker Street.

**Mathers Woods** - 50 acres of virgin timber one mile east on Highway 18 and  $\frac{1}{2}$  mile south of Nora Springs to access road. Woods is about  $\frac{1}{2}$  mile west of road. Access road is not graveled. The area is undeveloped and owned by Floyd County. It borders on the Shell Rock River which can be reached by a foot trail high above a stream that is fed by a large spring near the center of the preserve providing an excellent flower show in the spring. Warblers are abundant along the river during migration.

**Idlweild** - A large state area consisting of 136 acres that has been left in its natural state on the banks of the Cedar River. It is located 3 miles north of Floyd on Highway 218 then one mile west. The road through the park is rough and winding. There are tables and fireplaces for campers. A spectacular stream through the area should be inviting to warblers and other birds. Wild flowers are abundant in the spring.

**Wentland's Woods** - Consists of 101 acres of virgin timber maintained by the Floyd County Conservation Board. It is located north of Floyd on Highway 218 just across the river bridge then east one mile on county road B33 and then north  $\frac{1}{2}$  mile. It is undeveloped so an excellent area to find spring woodland wild flowers, native trees and shrubs. Birds and forest game species are found in their natural habitat and some paths are laid out.

**Marble Rock River Acres** - Just above the dam at Marble Rock on the Shell Rock River. It is used in conjunction with the City Park there. Tall trees and water attract birds.

**Boy Scout Camp - Winnebago Council** - one and one-half miles northwest of Marble Rock on County Road T26. It contains over 250 acres bordering the Shell River and provides excellent trails for the study of birds, flowers and trees. This area is owned and maintained by Boy Scouts of America. Permission is required to tour the camp. Contact the Boy Scout office in Mason City for further information and permission. Phone 515-423-0917. (See also I. B. L. Vol. 4 p. 110-111 for other Floyd County areas, ed)

#### Gerro Gordo County

**Asbury Park and Script Road** - Three acres along the Winnebago River and adjacent to Highway 18 east of Mason City. Trees and shrubbery along the river on both sides of the highway provide excellent birding. There are fireplaces and picnic tables in the little park.

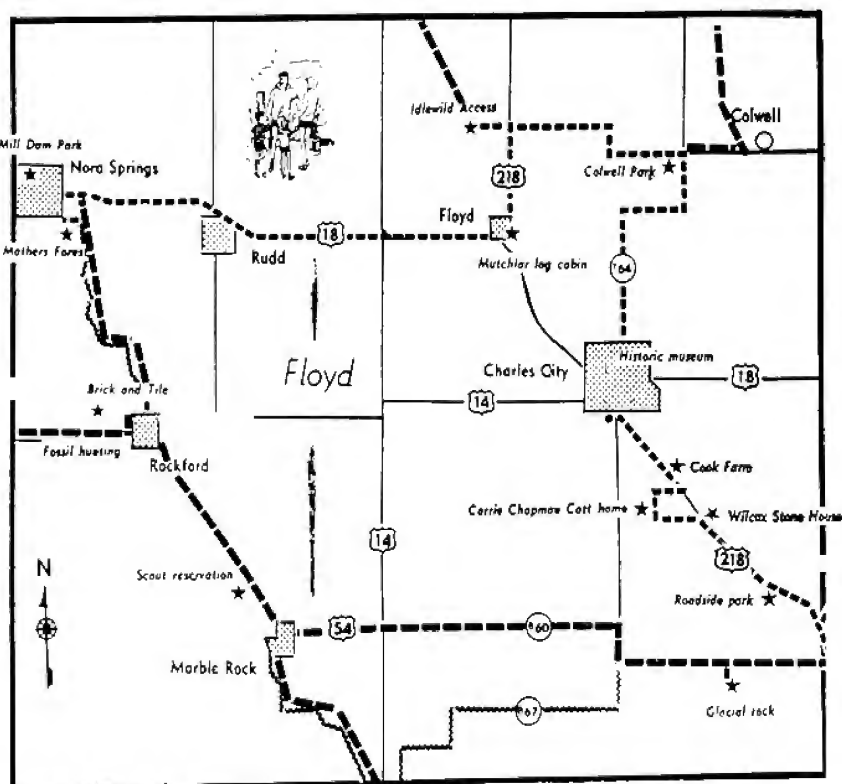
**Mason City Sewage Treatment Plant** - South of Asbury Park along the Winnebago River. On the west side of the road a large pond attracts ducks and the trees and shrubs along the edge attract warblers and nesting birds.

**Averydale Access** - On the same road along the Winnebago River is a tract of 6 acres with trees that attract many birds. Two swans stayed for sometime in a pond across the river in the spring of 1978.

**Clay Banks Forest** - Follow the Winnebago River flowing south and east to a 56 acre undeveloped wooded area. It is hilly and fine for wild flowers and birding.

**Linn Grove County Park** - 38 acres on the southwest side of Rockwell. A large stream runs through the park. It is partly wooded and birding is excellent at all times of the year.





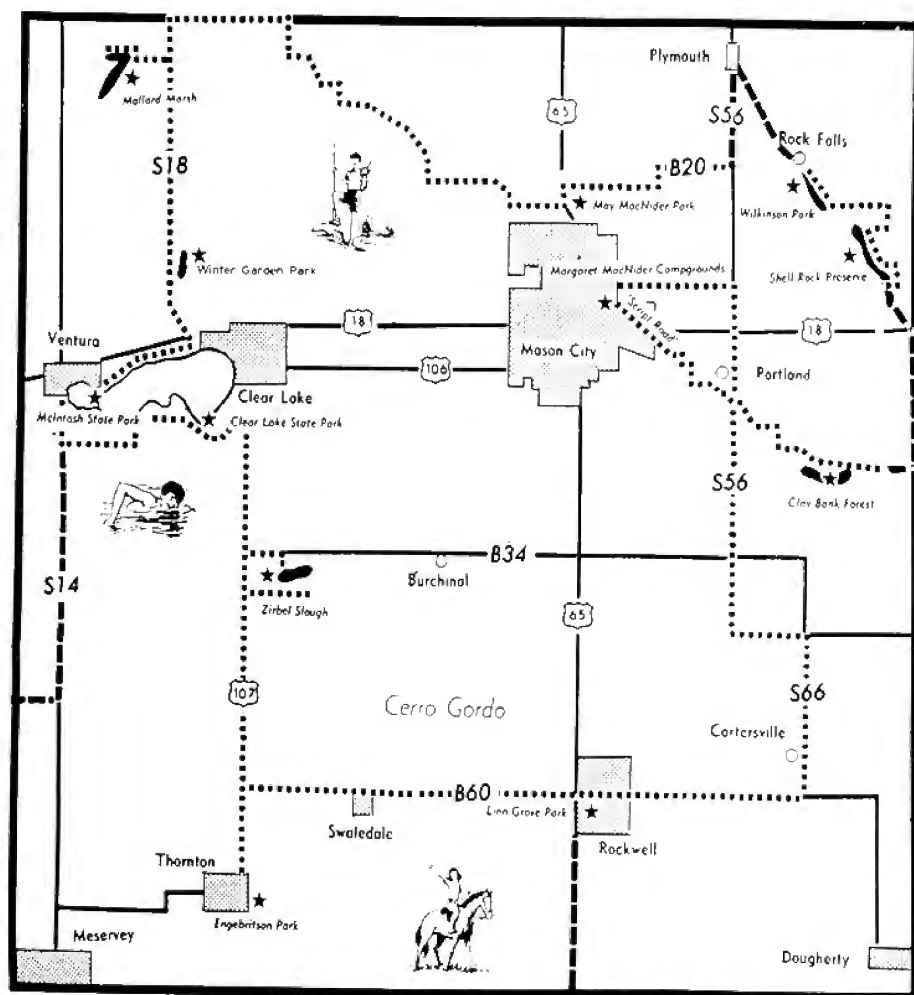
**Shellrock River Green Belt** - 590 acres bordering the Shellrock River from Nora Springs to Plymouth a distance of about 15 miles. Turn north off Highway 18 on the west side of the river (there are signs). The road is graveled but narrow and full of chuck holes. Tree line the river offering good birding opportunities.

**Shellrock River Preserve** - An 8 mile section of the Greenbelt between Nora Springs and Rock Falls. Everything is left in its natural state and no hunting is allowed. High limestone cliffs on the west side of the river provide nesting sites for Cliff Swallows. Turn north one mile west of Nora Springs. Go to the end of the road and turn east crossing the Shellrock River. The north entrance is close by on the south side. Drive down to the river to a parking area. Large trees and open areas provide good birding and wild flowers are abundant in spring. Walk to the edge of the river for a good view of the beautiful limestone cliffs and swallows nesting.

**Wilkinson Pioneer Park** - 20 acres along the Shellrock River on the South edge of Rock Falls. This is also a part of the Greenbelt. Large trees are in the picnic area. There is a native prairie grass area close by the covered bridge near the south end of the park. Prairie flowers and field birds are abundant here and along the railroad track that adjoins the park on the west. There is space for camping near the north entrance and picnic area.

**Zirbels Slough** - 310 acres located  $5\frac{1}{2}$  miles south from the junction of highways 106 and 107 in Clear Lake then  $1\frac{1}{2}$  miles east. This is a county marsh maintained as a public hunting area by the Cerro Gordo County Conservation Board. It is an excellent area to study waterfowl and furbearers in a natural wetland as the water comes right up to the road. Canada Geese and Yellow-headed Blackbirds are seen





here. Pheasants can also be observed in the uplands surrounding the marsh.

**McIntosh Woods State Park** - Entrance to the park is off Highway 18 between Clear Lake and Ventura - just east of Ventura. This park has gently sloping woods and meadows with facilities for picnicking, camping and a nature trail. The beach is on a peninsula sending a long finger out into the lake. Here shorebirds and waterfowl can be seen.

**Ventura Marsh** - West end of Clear Lake - southwest of Ventura. The best access is from the parking lot ½ mile south of Ventura and walk in on the south side of the marsh. This is a state-owned marsh maintained as a public hunting area by the Iowa Conservation Commission. The cropland is farmed on the contour with a three year rotation to provide food and nesting cover for game. Woody cover is available for pheasants and deer. Water levels on the marsh are adjusted to provide optimum conditions for waterfowl and furbearers.

**Engelbrtson Park** - 23 acres at the southeast corner of Thornton on Highway 107 is a county area. It features campgrounds, picnic and playground areas and though there is a stream running through it there doesn't seem to be much there to attract birds at this time.

**Mallard Marsh** - A 227 acre undeveloped marsh one mile south, three miles west, then  $\frac{1}{2}$  mile south of Fertile. There is a parking lot near a small lake. There is another entrance  $\frac{1}{2}$  mile south and about a mile west of this parking area. Ducks and shore birds can be seen here. It is open to hunting.

**Winter Garden Park** - This is a 70 acre county park. The terrain is most interesting. It consists of a large deep basin surrounded by hills. Oak trees grow on the hills and open areas provide meadow habitat. This park was developed primarily for winter sports activities but would be ideal for wildlife if it weren't for the motorcycles in the summer and the snowmobiles in winter. The park is located on S 18. Turn north off highway 18 between Clear Lake and Ventura at West Park Plaza and go north about  $\frac{1}{2}$  mile. A picnic pavilion and toilet facilities are available.

**Fin - Feather Lake** - 43 acres formerly a stone quarry donated by Northwestern Portland Cement Co. in 1972. The small lake is surrounded by marsh and meadows with trails leading right down to the edge of the water. Trees and shrubs have been planted. Tall cattails and other reeds provide protection for birds. Ducks and shore birds are attracted by the water. It is located  $3\frac{1}{2}$  miles south of the intersection of highway 18 (State Street) and highway 65 in Mason City, turn east  $\frac{1}{2}$  mile. Or from the east side of Mason City go south on So. Kentucky for  $3\frac{1}{2}$  miles then west  $\frac{1}{2}$  mile.

**Editor's Note** - This article concludes the Birding Areas of Iowa series with coverage of 97 of the 99 counties. The I.O.U. plans to compile these articles into a book. The book will include a state map keying the articles, updates for some articles and index for birds and areas. Work will proceed on the book only after 330 copies have been ordered. Enclosed you will find an order blank for this 140+ page book at the pre-publication price of \$3.50, post-paid. After publication it will cost \$4.50 plus postage. To insure the publication and reserve your copy at the reduced cost send your order with check payable to the I.O.U. to the editor at 235 McClellan Blvd., Davenport, Iowa 52803.

## FIELD REPORTS

Spring 1979

The species marked with + are on the National Audubon Blue List (Am. Birds 32:1106, 1978), the Iowa Blue List (I.B.L. 45:95, 1975) and/or on Dean Roosa's list of endangered, threatened or declining species in Iowa (I.B.L. 46:40, 1976).

**Addenda to the Winter Report.** Numerous exciting findings were reported too late to be included in the Winter Report, or documented late but in such a way as to remove any doubts. L. Manawa in early December was the place for unusual gulls: A Glaucous Gull seen on December 5-7 (TB, BW et al.) was joined a day later by a very convincingly described first-year Gr. Black-backed Gull (RG, J & SK), only the second for Iowa and the first west of the Mississippi. Jay Stravers furnished meticulous documentation for the male Black-backed Three-toed Woodpecker he, Mrs. Stravers and two friends studied at leisure and from as close up as 1.5 m on December 23, 1978. This is the first Iowa record since 1924, and only the third time the species has been seen in Iowa. A Varied Thrush at a feeder in Shenandoah, February 23 (RP), was well documented. Mrs. Sara Millikin sent a good description and a diagnostic color photo of the imm. male Black-headed Grosbeak that was present in Cedar Rapids December 1-10, 1978. She appended a list of the local birders who had also viewed this vagrant, apparently only the second of its species to be observed in the state (see longer note).

**General comments on the Spring Season.** March was cold and wet; the snow melted slowly, and the ice broke up late. Flooding was therefore not as bad as anticipated, but the reservoirs were near record height, and the lower levels of Ledges S. P. were inundated and left covered with mud. April was also cool and seemed wetter than the range gauges indicated. The cool weather continued into early May. The slow arrival of spring retarded migration of many species, but also the leafing out of trees, so that by mid-May conditions were ideal for seeing warblers. By then, the previously unspectacular migration of shorebirds had also picked up. All this, plus the fact that waterfowl lingered, made high counts possible at the May 13 I.O.U. meeting in Waterloo and on Big Day ventures: the old record of 131 species was eclipsed by the 142 scored by Tom Kent and Tom Shires on May 12, which in turn was bettered by Pete Petersen's spectacular one-man list of 152 on May 14. If the gas shortage doesn't doom such endeavors, a team could hope to see 160 species in Iowa under favorable conditions on a day in mid-May.

**Loons through Bitterns.** There were more reports of Com. Loons than in an average spring, with 13 on April 13 at Nashua an unusually high number (JS), and one still present at Forneys L. at the end of the period (RP) an exceptionally late straggler. The migration of Horned Grebes was not remarkable (10 in the northeast April 15-May 11 were considered par for the course, JS). There were about a dozen Eared Grebes seen in w. counties, which is as expected. But, like last year, a number were observed east of their usual flyway: one at Goose L., near Cedar Falls May 13, one at Goose Lake, Clinton Co., May 14 (PP), another at Lock 13, April 1 (PP), a fourth at Waterloo's George Wyth State Park (GWSP), April 13 (T St. Jr), and 5 at High Amana, May 19 (CB,TK). +Western Grebes were seen on May 4 at Nashua (JS) and in w. Sioux Co. on May 8 (fide JV). The flight of +Am. White Pelicans was, by unanimous consensus of western observers, the best in years, with a high count of 450 along the L. Sioux R. n. of Cherokee in mid-April (DB). Nine at Mud L., Palo Alto Co., on May 30 were quite late (JD), and it was suggested (DH) that some may be summering in the Iowa Great Lakes Region (IGLR). Up to 100 were the first ever observed at Saylorville L. n. of Des Moines (April 17, DMS), and the 17 at Nashua on April 15 (JS) were even farther east of their main migration corridor. The news about +Double-crested Cormorants is also very favorable. They were widely seen across the breadth of the state, by so many observers that a sampling of the records must suffice: 80 along the L. Sioux R. April 13-May 26 (DB), 45 in the Ames area (JD), with 21 at Hendrickson Marsh (M.) on May 21 (HZ), "the most ever" (75+) in the northeast, April 14-May 13, peaking at Nashua (55 birds, April 15) (JS), up to 24 at Cone M., Louisa Co., April 29 (TK), and over a dozen at Lock 13, April 1 (PP). All correspondents who mentioned Gr. Blue Herons quoted small or moderate numbers. Cattle Egret sightings were well below last year's, with only about 15 reported, of which 8 were at Cone M. in early May (TK). Only one was seen outside a belt running through the center of the state (n. of Sutherland, May 13, DB). There were the usual widespread observations of Gr. Egrets, but all referred to single birds or small groups at best. +Black-crowned Night Herons were reported in gratifying numbers (some 70 for the state), larger groups being 9 at Sweet M., May 9 (JS), 10 at Riverton in extreme s.w. Iowa, May 15 (TK, TSh), and up to 31 at Clear L., April 27-30 (DB, RC). In contrast, there was no mention of Yellow-crowned Night Herons. +Least Bitterns were evidently hard to find (one at Muskrat Slough, May 12, TK). +Am. Bitterns were more visible: singles in the Ames area March 24-May 11 (JD), at Spirit L., May 9 (DB), Clear L., April 30 (RC), and 3 in the northeast on May 1 (JS); they were "common" in the IGLR from early May on (DH).

**Waterfowl.** A Mute Swan was seen in Warren Co. on April 10 (WB, DMo). Where it came from is not known. Whistling Swans were observed in several places: 35 near New Albin in the extreme northeast, March 31 (JS,DK), 21 near New Hampton on April 21 (T St, T St Jr), 11 on the Coralville Reservoir (CoR) flood waters March 30-31 (KL,Ft,TK) and on the CoR itself a week later (same flock?) (KL), and 9 on Amana L., April 1 (MN). A swan at Riverton on March 14 could not be identified as to species, but it did lack the yellow bill mark (RP). As Ross Silcock has pointed out, the occurrence of Trumpeter Swans in w. Iowa would not be unexpected. Gr. White-fronted Geese are regular migrants in w. Iowa, but 335 at Sloan on April 4 (DB) are a good number. There were several records from the e. half of the state too: 35 at Big M., April 7 (T St Jr), 25 at Sweet M., March 25 (JS), and 4 at Cone M., March 31 (MN,TK). Snow Geese were abundant along the Missouri, but absent (CS) or few (JD) away from the river in w. Iowa. However, in the east, 130 were counted at Mark Twin N.W.R. on March 18 (TK), and 250 at Cone M. on March 31 (MN). A few Am. Black Ducks lingered into the second half of May (TK), and some were out of their normal range to boot (May 28, Dan Green Slough, JD). Richard Turner of Grinnell called in the sighting of a male Cinnamon Teal at Tama in early May. The only numerical value concerning +Canvasbacks reported was 382 on L. Clear L., April 13 (RC). It is becoming obvious that Gr. Scaups are going to be regularly seen if people scrutinize all scaups carefully (see longer article by TK), as witnessed by these observations: 20 on March 10, LeClaire (TK), 3 at New Albin, April 14 (JS), 6 at Guttenberg, March 23 (NH,TK,TSh), and 2 on the CoR, April 7 (TK), all documented. An oldsquaw near Cherokee, April 16, was described in detail (MB,DB). A female Surf Scoter near Des Moines, May 5 (DMo) was equally well documented (one was seen in the very same pond a couple of years ago). A female Black Scoter at Cone M. on March 31 (MN,TK et al.) was an even more unusual finding. Numerous people reported Hooded Mergansers, whose number was up in the Iowa City area (TK). There was a consensus that Red-breasted Mergansers were exceptionally common (for example, 40 at Nashua, April 13, JS, over 50 at GWSP, T St Jr, and 200+, the largest flock ever seen by PP, on April 1 at Lock 13).

**Diurnal Raptors.** As last year, the Stones again saw a Mississippi Kite, this time at GWSP on April 12. Documentation for a N. Goshawk in Ames on the unlikely date of May 9 was forwarded with misgivings (JD); I was not convinced either. The usual number of reports of +Sharp-shinned Hawks was received, but they referred to rather few birds; the total count of 24 in the northwest from February 24 to May 11 was definitely low (JS). +Cooper's Hawks are a different story, the state total for the period being at least 22 (singles: March 9, north of Iowa City, NH; March 11, Bellevue, T St and T St Jr; March 31, De Soto Bend N.W.R., KL; April 12, Davenport, PP; April 15, n. of Ames, ISU students; April 17, Swan L., Johnson Co., TK; May 19, Palisades Kepler State Park (PKSP), TK; 3 at Sweet M., April 27, T St and T St Jr; 6 in the period in the northeast, JS; and 6 or more flushed from a single grove of evergreens at Cambridge, April 15, HZ and ISU students). The migration of Red-tailed Hawks in Sioux Co. was "splendid" (JV). Several +Red-shouldered Hawks were recorded (3 at Sweet M., March 3, 30, and April 29, JS, one each at Greenbelt, March 18, T St and T St Jr, Union Slough N.W.R., April 30, EK, and on May 27 at Wildcat Den State Park (WDSP) as well as at Rochester Cemetery, MN). Truly big kettles of +Broad-winged Hawks were evidently not observed, 75 at Ames on April 18 (JD) being the highest number; but there was a "fine migration" in Sioux Co. (JV), and a record 11 were netted April 28-May 9 (PP). +Swainson's Hawks were bringers of good tidings. Three migrants

were seen April 8, 10 and 17 in the northeast (JS) and one on May 4 at Yellow River Forest (YRF) (DK). A pair at Waucoma from late April into late May was not too far from the site of a 1978 nest (JS). Two pairs did definitely nest in the same place as last year, in Osceola Co. (DB) and Hartman's Reserve, Waterloo (T St Jr), respectively. A Rough-legged Hawk near Pocahontas on April 30 (RC) was rather late. Lingering Bald Eagles were an imm. at Sweet M. on May 5 and an adult on May 12 near New Albin, which suggested breeding (JS). +N. Harriers were reported by many, but in rather modest numbers. The total number of +Ospreys for the state was 35-40, with a record 12 between April 12 and May 9 in the northeast (JS) and 16 (!) between April 13 and May 13 at GWSP (T St, T St Jr) accounting for most of them. A +Prairie Falcon in Polk Co. on April 26 was well seen by 2 very experienced birders (J & MM). Seven +Merlins are an excellent count for the season (4 of them documented). singles on March 11 at the CoR (TK), March 18 *ibid.*, (NH), March 24 in Sioux Co. (JV), April 5 at Hamburg (IG), April 21 at Cone M. (TK, TSh), and April 2 as well as 22 at Sweet M. (T St, T St Jr, RM). The migration of +Am. Kestrels in late March and early April was rated very good to excellent by reporters from the e. and w. parts of the state (WB, IG, C-S, JD, DB, RC); it was good at Davenport too (PP). At Elkhart, 46 were banded (DMs).

**Quails through Shorebirds.** Predictably, Com. Bobwhites paid for the third horrid winter in a row: they were sparse all over the state, and their status in the northwest was described as "lousy" (JV). Ring-necked Pheasants and Gray Partridges were only slightly or not at all affected. A Sandhill Crane was seen at Sweet M. April 16-17 (JS). Five reports of single Virginia Rails were received; one was the victim of a collision with a utility wire in Pocahontas (RC). A Yellow Rail was documented for Mark Sand Prairie near Cedar Falls, April 29 (T St, T St Jr), and another for Sweet M., May 5 (JS). Com. Gallinules, far from common in Iowa nowadays, were seen at Hendrickson M., Story Co. (one, May 6-12, ISU) and at New Albin (6, May 12, JS). Am. Coots were nesting "all over" the IGLR (JD). Up to 3 +Piping Plovers were at Nashua May 9-11 (JS), and singles at Amana L. (drained in May and therefore good shorebird habitat) May 3 and 19 (CB, TK). Larger flocks of Lesser Golden Plovers reported were 41 in Cherokee in mid-May (DB), 50 in Amana, April 17-20 (CB), 100 at Muskrat Slough, Jones Co., May 12 (TK), and an even 1,000 (wow!) at GWSP on May 4 (T St Jr). Since Black-bellied Plovers are less sociable, congregations of 17 at Ankeny, May 19 (HZ), 8 at Amana, same date, and 9 at the CoR, May 22 (TK) are noteworthy. Ruddy Turnstones made a good showing: one at Riverton on May 15 (TK, TSh), 3 at the CoR, May 23 (TK), and up to 13 at Amana, May 22-24 (CB, TK, KL). The nest of a Com. Snipe with 4 eggs was found on Hayden Prairie, May 5 (DK). There is one other recent nesting records for this species in Iowa. Reports of +Upland Sandpipers were, as usual, from widely scattered locations (April 20-May 29), with some 31 individuals mentioned. More than half of the total, however, is accounted for by the 16 counted on Mark Sand Prairie, April 28 (RM, T St Jr). Small numbers of Willets were recorded: up to 3 at Harmon L., Winnebago Co., April 26-May 2 (ISU), 2 n. of Hudson, April 28 (RM), and one by the CoR, May 10 (CB). A surprising number of contributors commented on the lack of Gr. Yellowlegs. The best shorebird of the season, and probably the most remarkable find for this spring, was a Purple Sandpiper in winter plumage associated with Pectorals in a puddle s. of Laurens, seen on April 30 (RC, DB). The descriptions furnished are excellent; unfortunately, attempts to photograph the bird failed. This is only the second time this denizen of rocky Atlantic shores has been observed in Iowa. As in 1978, White-rumped Sandpipers were relatively common, with 20 at Sweet M. on May 12 (HZ).

the largest number. Small groups of Baird's Sandpipers (one-4) were recorded from April 7-May 19, from Riverton in the southwest (TK, TSh) to Nahant M. on the Mississippi (PP). Thirty by the CoR on May 19 (KL) is a remarkably high count. Small groups of Dunlins were seen by many. Stilt Sandpipers reported were singles at Sweet M., May 12 (HZ, T St Jr) and the CoR, May 23 (TK), 3 encountered in May by FT, and 4 on May 1 at New Albin (JS). Western Sandpipers are not routine in the spring. This year, 2 were at Riverton, May 15 (TK, RSh), 4 at Nashua, May 12 (T St Jr), and up to 10 at the CoR, May 19-23 (TK). Marbled Godwits are even less common. The seasonal total is 6, with one on April 13-14 near Larabee (DB), one at Ankeny, April 21 (Stuart Burns fide WB), one at Hendrickson M., May 12 (ISU), another at Spirit L., May 16 (DH), and 2 at Amana L., May 23 (CB). Hudsonian Godwits were even more in evidence: 2 at Amana, April 14-17 (CB), one at Hendrickson M., May 12 (ISU), 7 at Ames, May 27-28 (HZ), 13 in the northeast, May 9-13 (JS), 15 near Laurens, May 8 (RC), and a spectacular 100+ at Riverton on May 15 (TK, TSh). Sanderlings are generally fall migrants in Iowa (and irregular at that). This spring, almost 50 were seen, including 9 at Nashua, May 11 (JS), 5 at Amana, May 29 (CB, TK), and 30 at the CoR, May 23 (FT). Single Am. Avocets were reported from Riverton, May 15 (TK, TSh) and near Laurens, May 1 (MB).

**Gulls through Swifts.** A flock of 10 Glaucous Gulls along the Missouri (IG) was doubly remarkable because of the late date (March 28-April 3). Saylorsville L. drew over 1,000 Ring-billed Gulls in early April (WB). Hundreds of Franklin's Gulls at DeSoto Bend N.W.R. on April 7 (JD) are not unusual. There were, however, numerous eastern records too (32 in the Iowa City area April 11-May 19, TK). +Com. Terns, carefully distinguished from Forster's, were seen (one each) in Chickasaw Co., May 13 (JS) at Cone M., May 5 (TK), and at Riverton, May 15 (TK, TSh). The largest number of Caspian Terns reported was 8 from Nahant M., May 14 (PP). +Black Terns moved through in an unevenly spaced pattern, with flocks of 100-200 at Sweet M., May 12 (HZ) and 500 at Forneys L., May 15 (TK). They were called "common" in the IGLR May 29-31 (JD). The reports on +cuckoos show no uniform trend, ranging from "no Yellow-billed" (JD) through "average for both" (TK) to markedly higher numbers for both species (WB). For the first time in years, +Barn Owls nested in Iowa, in Ross Silcock's yard, to assure they are duly recorded (from April 25 on, fide RP, WB). A week earlier, the conservation officer at Riverton picked up a mortally injured Barn Owl (fide RP). There were 12 reports of Long-eared Owls, with no geographic pattern (e.g., 3 at Mark Twain N.W.R., March 18, TK, and one at Oak Grove Park, Sioux Co., March 31, JV). Three were seen in mid-April near Cambridge (fide JD), and, for reasons not specified, nesting was suspected. A nest was found at Nodaway Park in s.w. Iowa (fide RP). Five +Short-eared Owls, all singles, were observed March 15-April 14, again with no pattern other than that of habitat. A Saw-whet Owl present in GWSP March 28-April 7 was caught and photographed (T St Jr). A Chuck-will's-widow was (I assume) heard in Shimek State Forest on May 30 (DK, JS). Like other migrants for which local records are kept, Chimney Swifts arrived late in Hamburg (IG).

**Woodpeckers through Thrushes.** Few people commented on +Red-headed Woodpeckers. Those who did, like JV, noticed good numbers returning. There was also little comment on the +Hairy Woodpecker. It is doing fine in Sioux Co. (JV). The only W. Kingbirds mentioned were 2 found by visitors to Fremont Co., May 15 (TK, TSh). A Scissor-tailed Flycatcher was seen s. of Shenandoah on May 4 by Jean Bordman, who knows the species well from Texas (fide RP). E. Phoebe's are



apparently hanging on in select habitats, such as WDSP, but are far from common. A Say's Phoebe encountered w. of Sioux Center (JV) on May 7 was documented. Yellow-bellied Flycatchers continue to be little noticed in the field, but 8 were netted May 10-27 (PP). Acadian Flycatchers are reliable year after year in WDSP, where up to 3 were seen May 23-30 (KL et al.). A nest was found on May 29 in Lacey-Keosauqua State Park (LKSP) (DK). All swallows were late arrivers in Hamburg (IG). +Purple Martins were easy to find in the Iowa City area (TK), but not enough information is coming in on this Blue Listed species. Red-breasted Nuthatches lingered into early May at Sweet M. (JS) and Ames (JD) (single birds). Winter Wrens may be showing the stress of rough winters; only a few were seen (Ames, April 14, Marilyn Glasson; GWSP, March 27 and April 21, Hartman's Reserve, April 13, TSt, TSt Jr). The same weather pattern seems to have wiped out Iowa's fragile Carolina Wren population -- not a single sighting was reported this spring! There were only sporadic items on Marsh Wrens, and not much more on +Sedge Wrens. N. Mockingbirds may also have been decimated by the harsh winter. Two were seen, each in somebody's back yard (April 15, Iowa City, KL; April 17-May 29, Elkhart, DMs). The migration of Swainson's and Gray-cheeked Thrushes was "spectacular" in the northwest (JV). The story of the +E. Bluebird continues to be a depressing one: those who spent a lot of time in the field (TK) found them only sporadically, and those who have nesting boxes (DB, DMs) report poor occupancy. A female Mountain Bluebird seen in W. Sioux County on April 7 (JV) appears to be only third record for Iowa.

**Gnatcatchers through Vireos.** The nest of a Blue-gray Gnatcatcher was found in WDSP on May 27 (MN). Golden-crowned Kinglets seem to be making a partial comeback. Whereas none were seen in the Cherokee area (DB), they were "very common" by mid-April in Ames (JD). The total counts reported by others (5-13, TK, PP, FT, RC) are still rather low. Water Pipits are often not seen until October in Iowa, so their number at Cone M. in late March and early April (up to 20, MN, TK) is noteworthy. Bohemian Waxwings were reported from New Albin, March 6 (JS) (one), Ames, March 12 (ISU) (3), and near Dubuque, March 11 (12) where only one of the "many observers" who saw them submitted information (TSt Jr). A flock of 100 Cedar Waxwings stayed until May 10 in Nashua (JS). The last of 3 N. Shrikes was seen n. of Decorah on March 31 (JS); one was in Iowa City on March 17 (TSh), and one was banded on April 1 (DMs). The total number of +Loggerhead Shrikes in the reports seems to fall short of 20. They were widely scattered, with reports from literally all 4 corners of the state, but no suggestion of nesting was made for any of the birds seen. Of 9 White-eyed Vireos mentioned, 3 were in the southeast (DK, late May), one in Scott Co., May 10, was considered a migrant (PP), one was in a familiar locale, Hickory Hill Park (HHP) in Iowa City, May 26 (TK et al.), 2 in YRF, May 4 and 12 (JS, DK), one in GWSP, May 19-26, TSt Jr, and one outside the usual range of the species, in Story Co., May 8 (HZ). +Bell's Vireo was again not present in Des Moines (WB), and seemed stable elsewhere. DH saw it for the first time in his n.w. Iowa area (Spirit L., May 26). There were rather few reports of Philadelphia Vireos, and their numbers were up only in Sioux Co. (JV) as well as in GWSP, where TSt Jr saw 2-9 daily (!) between May 8 and 29. There was comment on the shortage of +Warbling Vireos in the Iowa City area (MN), but better monitoring of this declining species is needed statewide.

**Warblers.** If this year's report will be strengthened by future observations, we may have to revise our ideas about the occurrence of some species considered rare, casual or even accidental in Iowa, at least for its s.e. portions. +Black-and-white Warblers were common in Sioux Co. (JV). One in the Cedar Rapids area on



March 31 (FT) was very early, especially in view of the late arrival of spring. There was a mini-invasion of Worm-eating Warblers (if not, indeed, an extension of their range). Up to 3 were heard and seen in WDSP from May 10 to 27 (TK, MN, KL), one in HHP on May 13 (TK), one in Marion, May 28 (FT), 2 in the Waterloo area, May 13-18 (TSt Jr), and more than 8 in late May - early June in LKSP (DK, JS). PP netted 5 between April 26 and May 4, which equalled his previous 15-year total! Nesting of 2 Blue-winged Warblers in Ledges S.P. was suspected (HZ). The IOU conventioners were treated to a Lawrence's hybrid at the Dudgeon Conservancy Area (May 13). A Brewster's hybrid was found in Marion (date?) (FT). The nest of 2 N. Parulas was discovered in LKSP on May 29 (DK). There is no clear picture of the status of the + Yellow Warbler. It is doing well in Sioux Co. (JV). The number of Cape May Warblers reported was rather high; for example, FT saw 6 and TK 3. A Black-throated Blue Warbler was seen in HHP on May 12 (KL). The high count for Cerulean Warblers was 5 in WDSP, May 19 (MN). It was confirmed that Blackburnian Warblers are regular in the far northwest corner of the state (JV). A Prairie Warbler was found in Cedar Rapids on May 12 (FT, KL). One or 2 Yellow-throated Warblers were behaving territorially in WDSP, May 12-27 (TK, TSh, PP, MN). One was seen in early May in Burlington (fide MN), where the observer (Mrs. Jane Fuller) considers the species regular. Indeed, 4 were found in the s. Iowa locale of LKSP on May 28 (DK, JS). Whatever its real status in Iowa is, the Yellow-throated Warbler should no longer be considered accidental. Louisiana Waterthrushes were found in such time-honored (but not consistently populated) strongholds as WDSP (May 6-27, TK, PP, MN) and PKSP (May 19, TK), near Stone City (May 19, FT), and nesting, with 2 young, at Shimek State Forest (May 24, DK). Over 10 Connecticut Warblers for one season is a remarkable total for Iowa: singles at Sweet M., May 13 (IOU convention, RM), Story Co., May 10 (HZ), Amana Woods, May 16 (CB), HHP, May 14-16 (MN), Ames, May 7 (JD), HHP, May 21 (KL), banded May 13 (PP), Larchwood (w. Iowa), May 21 (DH), PKSP, May 19 (TK, FT), and up to 5 (!) at GWSP, May 19-26 (TSt, TSt Jr). Mourning Warblers were also unusually common. For example, FT saw a total of 18 this spring. I am sorry I don't know GWSP: since I am not familiar with its peculiar magic, the 50 Mourning Warblers seen there on a single day (May 19, TSt Jr) strikes me as a *nephelococcygopolitan* number (see "The Birds" by Aristophanes). There were very few reports of + Yellow-breasted Chats. A Hooded Warbler was seen on May 22 in Marion (FT), one on May 29 in LKSP, another in Shimek State Forest, and a fourth on May 5 in GWSP (TSt), TSt Jr, Russ Hayes). Only one Canada Warbler was banded, on May 11 (PP), but MN saw 5 in the Iowa City area, a good count. The reports contain little information on the status of the + Am. Redstart.

**Blackbirds through Sparrows.** It seems that Yellow-headed Blackbirds are well established this year in suitable habitat all over the state. Five Brewer's Blackbirds were found at Nashua on March 21 (JS); a flock of up to 50 birds was near Cone M. March 25-31 (MN, TK, FT). A pair of Summer Tanagers was found, as anticipated, in Waubonsie S. P. on May 15 (TK, TSh). A male in the somewhat extralimital location of Ames (May 2 and 3) was documented (PMcC, LB). A female tanager with orange tones in its abdominal feathers and undertail coverts seen in WDSP on May 27 (MN) was, perhaps too diffidently, reported as a "possible" Summer Tanager. The only Blue Grosbeak in the reports was one in Fremont Co., May 15 (TK, TSh), where the species is regular. The overall impression is that the number of + Dickcissels in Iowa has indeed started to decline, incredible as this may have seemed just a few years ago. Evening Grosbeaks, few during the winter, emerged in early spring: 5 stayed into early April at Ames (JD,

ISU), 9 at Amana, March 17 (TK) (known to have wintered), and 4 at Panora, March 11 (RC). Pine Siskins started to nest in Ames in April, but failed. They stayed into mid-May at Iowa City (TSh et al.), Davenport (PP), and Sioux Center (JV). A White-winged Crossbill on the medical campus in Iowa City, March 6 (TSh), was unexpected, since none were seen during the winter. LeConte's Sparrows were few: 2 at Cone M., April 21 (TK), and one at Ames (Pat Heagy fide JD), May 4. Single + Henslow's Sparrows were at Volga L., April 3 and St. Lucas, May 6 (JS), and 2 at Hayden Prairie, May 26 (TK) and 28 (TSt Jr). A Sharp-tailed Sparrow was observed at Hendrickson M. by 3 ISU students on May 12 (fide JD). Those who commented on + Vesper Sparrows and considered them common were from Ames (JD, HZ) and points northwest (RC). Lark Sparrows were rather hard to find: FT saw a total of 5 (locations not indicated), TK, who tried very hard, saw none. Two Clay-colored Sparrows were in HHP on May 2 (TK, TSh); in the northwest, where they are regular, they were unusually common this spring (JV). PP banded only 4 Lincoln's Sparrows. Large flocks of Lapland Longspurs in breeding plumage came through Sioux Co. on March 24 (JV) and Ames on April 15 and 24 (ISU). Five were late stragglers (May 6) at St. Lucas (JS). Two-hundred late Snow Buntings were seen at Rockwell City on March 10 (GJ) and one near Ossian on April 1 (DK).

**Contributors:** Carl Bendorf, Iowa City; Dick Bierman, Cherokee; Gladys Black, Pleasantville; Lynn Braband, Ames; Tanya Bray, Omaha NE; Marion Brewer, Cherokee; Woodward Brown, Des Moines (also for other observers in Polk Co.); Raymond Cummins, Pocahontas; James Dinsmore, Ames (also for Iowa State University students); Ione Getscher, Hamburg; Ruth Green, Bellevue NE; Janet Greer, Council Bluffs; Nicholas Halmi, Iowa City; Douglas Harr, Rock Rapids; Glenn Jones, Rockwell City; Thomas Kent, Iowa City; Erwin Klaas, Ames; Darwin Koenig, Decorah; James and Sandra Kovanda, Omaha NE; Kenneth Lowder, Iowa City; Pat McCrow, Ames; Sara Millikin, Cedar Rapids; Dick Mooney (DMo), Des Moines; Dean Mosman (DMs), Elkhart; Jack and Mary Musgrove, Des Moines; Robert Myers, Waterloo; Mike Newlon, Iowa City; Peter Petersen, Davenport; Ruth Phipps, Shenandoah; Joe Schaufenbuel (JS), St. Lucas; Conrad Schlemmer, Spencer; Thomas Shires (TSh), Iowa City; Tom Stone and Tom Stone, Jr. (TSt), Waterloo; Jay Stravers, Boulder CO.; Fred Thompson, Marion; John Van Dyk, Sioux Center; Barb Wilson, Hastings; Hank Zaletel, Ames (also for Linda Zaletel, Marlyn Glasson and others). N. S. HALMI, R 6, Iowa City, IA 52240.

**Field Report Editor's Note.** Since I will be leaving Iowa for at least a year, **Field Reports** will henceforth be compiled by **Dr. Thomas H. Kent**, 211 Richards, Iowa City, IA. 52240. The deadline for summer (June-July) observations is August 8. I have received an unprecedented number of reports and documentations for this spring, and hope you will continue to give this kind of gratifying support to Tom Kent too. N. H.

## GENERAL NOTES

**Some Aspects of Cuckoo Nesting Ecology in Lucas County, Iowa** -- The Yellow-billed Cuckoo (*Coccyzus americanus*) and Black-billed Cuckoo (*Coccyzus erythrophthalmus*) have been called "common summer residents" or "common breeding birds" by several authors (Anderson 1907, DuMont 1933, Grant 1963, Brown 1971). Recently, however, the Black-billed Cuckoo's status was designated as "undertermined" in Iowa (Roosa 1977). This means that the bird is known to exist in Iowa, but we do not have sufficient information to make an accurate assessment of its status.

Stauffer (1978) found nine Yellow-billed and five Black-billed Cuckoo nests in riparian habitats in Guthrie County during two breeding seasons. During a 1978 Mourning Dove (*Zenaidura macroura*) nesting study conducted in cooperation between the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the Iowa Conservation Commission, 10 Black-billed and five Yellow-billed Cuckoo nests were located in Lucas County. In this study two coniferous and three deciduous plots were searched weekly. Coniferous plantings consisted mainly of red pine (*Pinus resinosa*), white pine (*Pinus strobus*), and Scotch pine (*Pinus sylvestris*). Deciduous plots included osage-orange (*Maclura pomifera*) hedgerows, hawthorn (*Crataegus* spp.) uplands, multiflora rose (*Rosa multiflora*) and honeysuckle (*Lonicera* spp.) plantings.

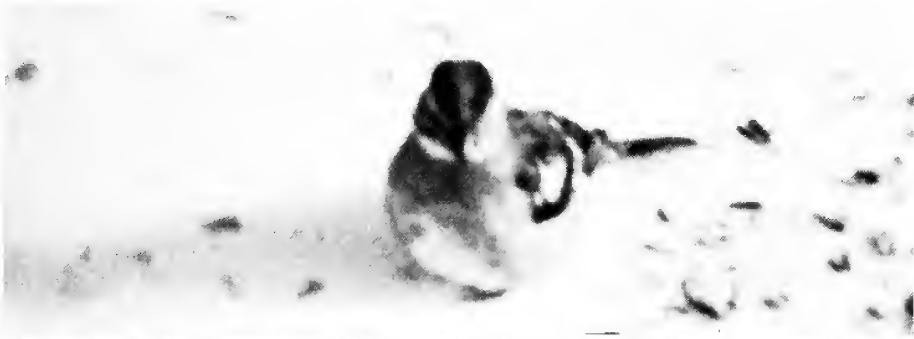
Data collected at each nest included phenology, success, number of young fledged, substrate, and height above ground. The nesting season for both Yellow-billed and Black-billed Cuckoos was from the end of May through June. Eighty percent of the nests of each species were located in coniferous habitat. Nest success for the Black-billed and Yellow-billed Cuckoos was 70 and 100 percent, respectively. (Nests were designated successful if at least one young fledged.) Mean number of young fledged was 2.6 for Black-billed and 3.2 for Yellow-billed Cuckoos. Mean nest height for Black-billed Cuckoos was 1.3 meters and 1.1 meters for the Yellow-billed Cuckoo.

Bent (1964:77-78) reported cuckoos of both species frequent areas of caterpillar outbreaks, and this could account for the relative abundance of cuckoo nests I located this year. There was an abundance of sawfly larvae (*Neodiprion* spp.) feeding on pine needles in the coniferous plantings in my study area. Both species of cuckoos may have been using these larvae as a readily available food source resulting in my plots having a high nesting population of cuckoos.

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- LOREN M. SMITH, 717½ 13th Ave., Brookings, S. D. 57006.

Black-headed Grosbeak at Cedar Rapids -- The bird came to our feeder from December 1 to 11, 1978 and always lit on a tree limb before it flew to the ground to eat seeds. It came several times each day and I could always see it at daylight and again about 4:00 p.m. Other times it was more irregular. I had seen them in



Yellowstone Park previously. The following people were able to see it while it was here, Dr. and Mrs. Goellner, Lillian Serbousek, Roberta Oppedahl, Lucile Liljedahl, Weir Nelson, Mr. and Mrs. Fred Nissen and Pete Wickham. I am sorry I couldn't notify more people of its presence, but since I live with my daughter and her family, I didn't want to publicize it too widely. -- SARA MILLIKIN (MRS. FORREST), 1126 Ingleside Drive S. W., Cedar Rapids.

**Foot Pox in a Northern Junco** -- On Jan. 4, 1977 I removed a Northern Junco (*Junco hyemalis*) from a drop-door trap. Both feet were covered with nodules or tumors of varying sizes but no open lesions. Suspecting foot pox with which I was familiar in Georgia I took the bird to Mark A. Poell DVM who extracted material from one nodule. This was sent to David Graham DVM veterinarian pathologist, ISU, Ames. A diagnosis of Poxvirus avium was made by electron microscopy and a picture of the virus X 100,000 was received in March.

Avian pox is a viral infection of birds with a world wide geographic distribution. It was endemic in Georgia during my residence there but this was the first time I had seen it on any of the birds I had banded in Iowa during the past twenty years. It is transmitted directly by contacts between infected and susceptible birds and indirectly by contact with contaminated objects such as perches or feeders and by insect vectors especially mosquitoes. Poxvirus is unable to penetrate unbroken skin but small abrasions allow entry of the virus.

Avian pox occurs in two forms, the diphtheritic form in which moist necrotic lesions develop on the mucous membranes of the mouth and upper respiratory tract and the more common skin form in which warty, proliferative lesions develop on the skin. Lesions are most common on the unfeathered parts of the body - legs, feet, eyelids, base of the beak and on the comb and wattles of gallinaceous birds. The incubation period varies with the strain and host species from 4 to 14 days in chicken to one month in the flicker.

Duration of the disease is equally variable from 4 weeks in chickens, 82 days in a Mourning Dove, 13 months in a flicker, several months in Chipping Sparrows and 80 to 109 days in Northern Juncos.

Pox lesions heal, following degeneration and sloughing of the proliferated epithelium sometimes with the loss of the ends of toes, observed in towhees in Georgia. Little is known about mortality rates in wild birds. Mortality rates in chickens with the diphtheritic form of pox is higher than in birds with cutaneous pox.

Birds recovered from pox infection usually are immune to reinfection. A partial list of wild birds known to have had cutaneous pox infection includes the Brown Creeper, American Crow, Chipping, Field, Song, Am. Tree and White-throated Sparrows, Northern Juncos, towhees, cowbirds, grackle, N. Mockingbird, Cape May Warbler, Yellow-breasted Chat, C. Yellowthroat, pheasant, quail,

flicker, E. Starling, Ruffed and Sage Grouse, Am. Robin, Gray-cheeked, Swainson's, and Wood Thrushes. Diphtheritic pox has been found in pheasants, quail, E. Starling, and Ruffed Grouse.

This junco was caged for one week. It ate well and appeared to be in good condition when released Jan. 11, 1977 wearing band number 125-56757.

I wish to thank Mark Poell DVM and David Graham DMV for their professional assistance.

GLADYS BLACK, Pleasantville, Iowa 50225

**Waterfowl, Ducks, Geese and Swans of the World** -- Frank S. Todd -- Sea World Press, 1250 6th Ave., San Diego, Cal. 92101 -- 399 p., 788 color photographs -- 1979 -- \$29.95 until September 30, 1979 then \$44.95 in book stores, lower price direct

Just published, this is undoubtedly the most beautiful waterfowl volume ever published. It contains a wealth of color photographs which vary in size from double page spreads to the size of a large postage stamp. They are the heart of the book and would alone be worth the current price, very reasonable by 1979 standards. The photographs not only depict many plumages but show unique behavior and usually invisible activities such as diving ducks under water.

The text contains all the basic facts about the 145 species and is quite readable. In addition to covering the taxonomic groups within this order the author discusses captive displays, maintenance, propagation and the future of waterfowl. In two appendixes we find a concise reference guide covering common and Latin names, distribution, weight, nesting data and status as well as suggestions for photography. With the low price in effect until September 30, this would make a fine Christmas present to purchase now for a serious birder. ed.

**Wildfowl of the World** -- Eric Soothill and Peter Whitehead -- Blandford Press Ltd., Poole, Dorset, available in the U. S. from Sterling Publ. Co., 2 Park Ave., New York -- 297 p., 128 color plates and maps -- 1978 -- \$14.95.

This book covers the same birds as the previously reviewed volume, but in a more conventional manner. Each species is covered by a two page spread which includes a color photograph, range map, description, characteristics, behavior, habitat, distribution, food, voice and breeding habits. It also includes a list of areas around the world where waterfowl may be observed in the wild. It is not overwhelming as Todd's book but is a more practical size and probably contains more text. It is as highly recommended and will probably be used more frequently as a reference book and less as a cocktail table adornment. ed.

**Bird Spotting** -- John Holland - Blandford Press, Ltd., Poole, Dorset, available in the U. S. from Sterling Publishing Co., address above -- 291 p., over 100 color plates, many line drawings -- 1976 -- \$6.95.

This is another British field guide, this one first published in 1955. The text and plates are together and the order is more standard, but it does not come up to current standards in field guides. Some information not given in many guides such as number of eggs, incubation and fledgling period and number of broods is included. It is recommended only as a supplementary guide. ed.

**Birds in Colour** -- Bruce Campbell -- Blandford Press, Ltd., London, available in the U. S. from Sterling Publishing Co., Inc., address above -- 231 p., 256 color plates -- 1974 -- \$6.95.

This field guide to British birds, first published in 1960, is noteworthy for a good set of plates. The birds appear two per page making them at least double the size of those in most newer guides. However the text is not opposite the plates, no range maps are included and the order is reversed and a bit mixed up. The book is not especially recommended. ed.

**Birds of Britain and Europe in Colour** -- Dennis Avon and Tony Tilford -- Blandford Press, Ltd., Poole, Dorset, available in the U. S. from Sterling Publishing Co., address above -- 176 p., 133 color photographs, 100 range maps, many line drawings -- 1975 -- \$6.95.

This is a collection of excellent photographs of 100 species of European birds. The range of each species is indicated by a range map and the text presents the basic life history information. The introduction, written by Jim Flegg, summarizes background information essential in making an identification, lists the families in the European order with Corvids last, capsulizes migration and adaptations, gives a fine code of ethics for birding, and the techniques of photography. Although dealing with European birds the book is worth its price for the photographs alone. ed.

**First Aid and Care of Wild Birds** -- J. E. Cooper and T. J. Eley, eds. -- David and Charles, North Pomfret, Vt. -- 288 p., 23 black-and-white photographs, many line drawings -- 1979 -- \$26.00.

This British book includes several chapters by Americans and contains a great deal of specific information on its subject. Most of the text applies just as much to the U. S. as to Great Britain. Some specific chapter headings will convey the aspects of the coverage: diagnosis and control of disease, feeding birds, wounds and injuries, parasites, poisons, birds and oil pollution, anaesthesia, euthanasia, cage design and construction and families which present special problems. It is an expensive book and hopefully veterinarians with an interest in helping injured wild birds will consider its purchase. ed.

**BIRDS OF IOWA** -- Gladys Black -- The Nature Conservancy -- 80 pp, 64 black and white photographs, 2 color photographs, 9 drawings. -- 1979 -- \$10 plus .50 postage, order from Jon Stravers, 1210 University, Pella, Iowa 50219.

This book is not a field guide, but a collection of life histories about birds which Gladys Black had chosen to write about for her series of articles which have appeared over the past ten years in the Des Moines Register. If individual bird illustrations could have been reproduced in color, the attractiveness of the book would have been enhanced, however, the intent on publishing this volume is to raise money to purchase wildlife habitat through the action of The Nature Conservancy, thus the price is a tax-deductible donation to the organization and includes a one year membership in both the Iowa Chapter and the national organization. -- CARL KURTZ

**The Living Bush, A Naturalist's Guide** -- Peter Wilson -- Hamish Hamilton, North Pomfret, Vt. -- 104 p., 25 color and 7 black-and-white photographs, over 100 line drawings -- 1977 -- \$17.95.

Some books are unique and this is one. It is a reference book, a narrative and a detailed diary all in one volume. The author takes us on a two day hike through a typical area of Australian brushland. He shows us how to find and identify mammals, birds, reptiles, insects and other creatures. The color plates are beautiful and the hour by hour narrative will hold the interest of all avid naturalists, Australian or American. ed.

**Vertebrates of Florida** -- Henry M. Stevenson -- The University Presses of Florida, Gainesville -- 607 p., 66 maps, plates and 10 text figures -- 1976 -- \$35.00.

Using keys and verbal descriptions the author provides a means of identifying about 880 species of vertebrate animals. The 421 species of birds occupy over 200 pages of the book. While a bit far afield for the average Iowan this book could be emulated in other states. It would find a welcome market, especially if it were as well done as the Florida effort. ed.



**Rare and Endangered Biota of Florida, Vol. 2 Birds** -- Herbert W. Kale II, ed. -- University Presses of Florida, Gainesville -- 121 p., many black-and-white photographs, line drawings and maps -- 1978 -- paperbound \$7.00.

The State of Florida has produced a fine series on the threatened vertebrates of the state. This bird volume covers the endangered, threatened and rare populations plus species of special concern. A total of 68 species and races are covered. The text first describes the major terrestrial and wetland habitats and for each bird covered, includes other names, description, range, habitat, life history and ecology, specialized or unique characteristics, basis of status classification, recommendations and references. Each is written by a field biologist quite familiar with the species. Hopefully other states will help protect their threatened animals by presenting such a detailed background paper. ed.

**Birds with Human Souls, A Guide to Bird Symbolism** -- Beryl Rowland -- University of Tennessee Press, Knoxville -- 213 p., many black-and-white illustrations -- 1978 -- \$15.00.

The symbolic significance of some birds is obvious, the Raven, being black and possessing a raucous call, seems a bird of bad omens. But why was the Goldfinch the favorite bird of baby Jesus in Italian paintings? This book delves into such questions in depth and we learn the Goldfinch represented the soul Christ had come to save. Carefully documented and deeply researched, the text is still interestingly written. ed.

**Birds of Western Australia** -- D. L. Serventy and H. M. Whittell + University of Western Australia Press, Perth, W. A., available in the U. S. from International Scholarly Book Service, Box 555, Forest Grove, Oregon 97116 -- 481 p., 9 color plates, 55 line drawings, 10 maps -- 1976 -- \$21.00.

This fine book on Australia's largest state had undergone its fifth revision. The species accounts provide a fine and detailed description, local names, distribution, nesting data, habits and voice. It contains an excellent account of the ornithological history of the state and a bird geography section that is helpful for most of the country. Anyone birding in Australia will find this book especially useful for waders and seabirds and it covers all desert birds nicely. ed.

**Sunbirds of Southern Africa** -- C. J. Skead -- A. A. Balkema, Capetown, S. Africa, available in the U. S. from International Scholarly Book Service, address above -- 351 p., 10 color plates, 12 black-and-white photoplates, 7" record, many maps and line drawings -- 1967 -- \$29.00.

This fine monograph has not been readily available in the U. S. until recently. It covers 26 species of sunbirds, sugarbirds, white-eyes and the Spotted Creeper. Except for the creeper all suck nectar and fill the role of new world hummingbirds in Africa. The treatment of these fascinating birds is quite complete and includes local names in several languages, field characters, habits, range map, habitat, food, voice, breeding data, parasitism, and taxonomy. The color plates depict male and female, eggs and are grouped with similar species together. ed.

**Proceedings of '77 and '78 Bald Eagle Days** -- Terrence N. Ingram -- Eagle Valley Environmentalists, Inc., Box 155, Apple River, Ill. -- 143 p. and 118 p., -- 1977 and 1978 -- paperbound, \$10.00 each.

Every winter the Eagle Valley Environmentalists host a conference devoted to reports on studies of the Bald Eagle. These publications present the text of the papers and the roundtable discussions which are held at the conferences. Each year the presentations are centered around a theme. In 1977 it was eagle movements and in 1978, the more general topic of learning about eagles. Much valuable information is contained in these reports and their purchase supports the land acquisition activities of EVE. Inc. ed.